A HISTORY OF WELBECK ABBEY AND ITS OWNERS

Volume One

1539–1755

A. S. TURBERVILLE

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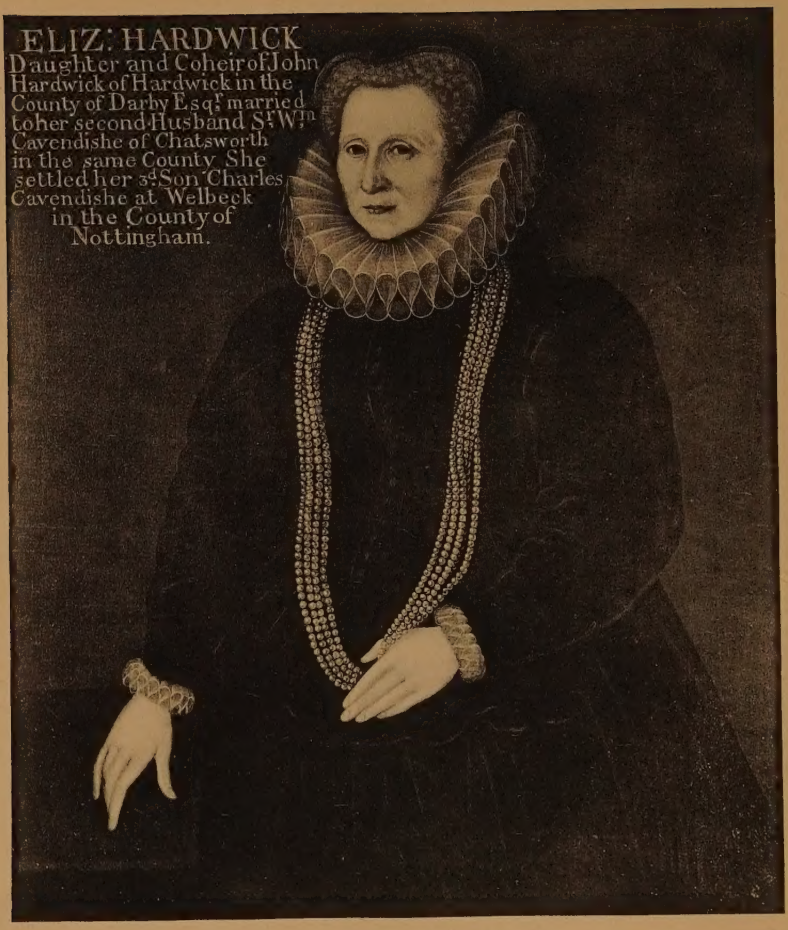
ELIZ: HARDWICK
Daughter and Coheir of John Hardwick of Hardwick in the County of Darby Esq.r married to her second Husband Sr. Wm. Cavendishe of Chatsworth in the same County She settled her 3d. Son Charles Cavendishe at Welbeck in the County of Nottingham.

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A HISTORY OF WELBECK ABBEY AND ITS OWNERS

Volume One: 1539–1755

by

A. S. TURBERVILLE
Professor of Modern History in the University of Leeds

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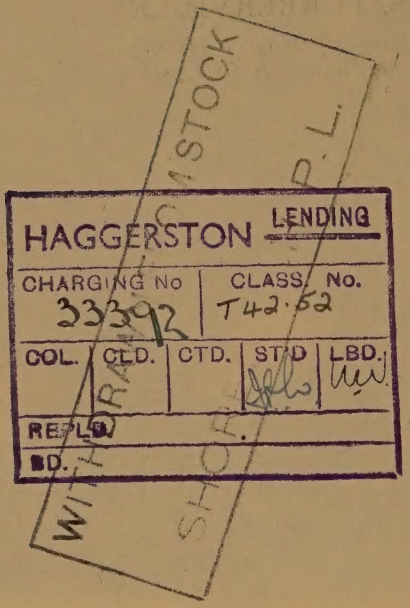

In
ever loving memory
of

OTTOLINE MORRELL
1873–1938

FOREWORD

It has been my wish for some years to ask a skilled historian to write an account of the owners of Welbeck Abbey, dealing in particular with the part so many of them have played in the history of their country. In these days of uncertainty, I am anxious to make sure that a record of their lives and of their home should be left to posterity, and that it should be completed before I die.

I was advised to entrust the work to Mr. A. S. Turberville, M.C., Professor of Modern History in the University of Leeds, who has kindly allowed me to read an advance copy of his book. I have done so with very great interest—may I say, too, with sincere admiration, both for the thoroughness of his research, and for the charming lucidity of his style. I hope that, when the book is issued, other readers will find as much interest, pleasure and fresh knowledge of the history of our country in its pages as I have.

PORTLAND

PREFACE

This work owes its inception to the Duke of Portland, whose invitation to write it was readily accepted by one specially interested in the history of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and in the men and women who helped to make it.

The Duke desired that the book should be a record not only of the buildings of Welbeck Abbey, but also of its owners, and of the part which they have taken in the life of the nation. My primary purpose therefore has been to sketch the characters and careers of those members of the families of Cavendish, Holles, Harley, and Bentinck who have been in possession of Welbeck from the time of the dissolution of the Abbey until the death of the fifth Duke of Portland in 1879. An account of the house of Premonstratensian canons which existed at Welbeck from the 12th century until its dissolution in 1538 is being written by my colleague, Professor A. Hamilton Thompson, while the recently published memoirs of the Duke of Portland, entitled *Men, Women and Things*, form in a sense a continuation of the present work. Together the three books provide a continuous narrative of the annals of Welbeck Abbey from the foundation of the religious house to the present day.

The part of the story for which I am responsible begins with the granting of the lease of Welbeck Abbey by Henry VIII to Richard Whalley[1] in 1539: but the first great figure

[1] There is a wood on the Welbeck estate still known as Whalley Thorns.

in the secular history of the house is the celebrated Bess of Hardwick, who by her second marriage, to William Cavendish, was the ancestress both of the branch of the Cavendish family established at Chatsworth, and of the branch which became possessed of Welbeck. Her grandson was the famous 'loyal' Duke of Newcastle, who commanded the Royalist forces in the north of England in the Civil War until the battle of Marston Moor; and he and his remarkable second wife and biographer, Margaret Lucas, are among the most notable characters in the history of the house. After the death of Henry, second Duke of Newcastle, there occurred a failure of heirs male in three successive generations; and the property passed, first, by the marriage of Margaret, the third daughter of the second Duke, into the possession of John Holles, fourth Earl of Clare (subsequently created Duke of Newcastle-upon-Tyne); second, by the marriage of their daughter Henrietta, to Edward Harley, second Earl of Oxford; and finally, by the marriage of Margaret Cavendish Holles Harley to the second Duke of Portland, into the possession of the Bentinck family.

The principal source of information for the history of Welbeck Abbey in private ownership is the voluminous correspondence preserved there. Ten volumes, dealing almost entirely with the Harley family, have been printed by the Historical Manuscript Commission; but, even so, the bulk of the papers of the second Earl of Oxford have not been touched, and the very numerous papers of the Dukes of Portland are still unprinted. But abundant as are the manuscript materials at Welbeck itself, they have had to be supplemented by other manuscripts in the British Museum and the Public Record Office, while there are also many relevant authorities in print. In order to distinguish at a glance between those papers at Welbeck which have been printed and those which have not, it has

been found convenient in the footnote references to describe the former as *Portland MSS*, the latter as Welbeck MSS. All the illustrations, with one or two exceptions, are taken from pictures, miniatures, and original documents at Welbeck Abbey.

The present volume carries the story as far as the death of the widowed Countess of Oxford in 1755. The second volume, which, it is hoped, will be published next year, will be concerned with the Bentinck owners of Welbeck.

In the course of my work I have had constant reason to feel gratitude to a former Librarian at Welbeck, the late R. W. Goulding, whose careful arrangement and docketing of the manuscripts has been a great boon, and whose monographs on various subjects connected with the history of the house have been most useful. Still greater are my obligations to his successor, Mr. Francis Needham, who has given me valuable help at every stage of my task, in placing freely at my disposal his knowledge of the history of the house and of its records; by reading the whole book in manuscript and in proof; and by making many useful criticisms and suggestions. I am most grateful for such generous collaboration. Finally, I wish to express my very sincere thanks to the Duke of Portland himself, who has done everything possible to render my work entirely enjoyable by the many facilities he has afforded, by his kindness and hospitality and, not least, by his own infectious enthusiasm for the undertaking.

A. S. TURBERVILLE

7 March, 1938

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS IN THE FOOTNOTES

Add. MSS. Additional Manuscripts (in the British Museum).

Brit. Mus. British Museum.

C.S.P.D. Calendar of State Papers (Domestic Series).

D.N.B. Dictionary of National Biography.

E.H.R. English Historical Review.

H.M.C. Historical Manuscripts Commission.

P.R.O. Public Record Office.

As is indicated in the Preface,

Portland MSS. Papers in the possession of the Duke of Portland which have been calendared by the Historical Manuscripts Commissioners.

References to these are made to the printed versions, which are easily accessible.

Welbeck MSS. Papers of the Duke of Portland not calendared by the Historical Manuscripts Commission.

Chapter I

THE WHALLEY FAMILY

Edmund Burke sang the praises of aristocratic government in England when it was in its eighteenth-century heyday. In a letter written to the Duke of Richmond in 1772, he drew a contrast between people of great family and hereditary trust and fortune, on the one hand, and private individuals like himself, on the other, whom he described as 'but annual plants'. 'You, on the contrary,' he declared, 'if you are what you ought to be, are in my eye the great oaks that shade a country, and perpetuate your benefits from generation to generation.' The heads of such families handed down their principles to their successors; and thus, he maintained in a notable phrase, they became 'the public repositories and office of record for the constitution'.[1] Burke spoke in similar terms elsewhere. 'No wise king of England', he wrote in another letter, 'would think it for his credit to let it go abroad that he considered himself, or was considered by others as personally at variance with a Lord Rockingham, a Duke of Richmond, a Duke of Portland, . . . the families of the Cavendishes'.[2] Again, in his *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents*, he draws an elaborate contrast between the followers of Pitt and the followers of Rockingham. The power of the former was 'vast and merited; but it was in a great measure per-

[1] *Corr. of Edmund Burke* (ed. Earl Fitzwilliam and Sir R. Bourke, 4 vols., 1844), vol. i, pp. 381-2.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 294-5.

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sonal, and therefore transient'. But the power of the great Whig families that supported Rockingham was rooted deep in the country; with a great deal less popularity it was more firmly fixed—it was a power rooted in long experience of government, vast property, the obligations conferred by honours given and received, ties of blood and of friendship, the tradition of zealous service rendered to the royal family.[1]

The argument inherent in Burke's eulogy on the noble Whig families which constituted the Rockingham Connection is similar to that of Harrington in his *Oceana*. In an 'equal Commonwealth', as he terms it, the political power must be firmly established in the possession of landed property; and there is need of a Nobility, of persons who are not primarily engaged in the task of supporting themselves, of persons *à leur aise*—'especially when their Familys com to be such as are noted for their services done to the Commonwealth, and so take into their antient Riches antient Virtue'.[2]

The nobility known to Harrington and to Burke, however ancient their lineage, for the most part owed their peerages to the house of Stuart. Few titles of to-day are of earlier origin. The medieval baronage—the Bigods, the Bohuns, the Warennes, were extinct before the Middle Ages closed; the last of the old order and of the old peerages perished in the Wars of the Roses.

A new order and a new nobility came with the accession of the Tudors. It was the servants of the new monarchy, not descendants of the iron barons who had forced the acceptance of Magna Carta upon King John, or of the great families whose too close connection with royalty eventually plunged England in a dynastic war, that now scantily filled the House of Lords. A real revolution in the history of that Chamber had taken place. There is no other epoch in our

[1] *Works of Burke* (8 vols., 1853), vol. i, pp. 318-19.

[2] *The Oceana and other Works of James Harrington* (1735), p. 135.

history so essentially revolutionary as that of the Tudors. The greatest revolution accomplished during that period was the religious movement which followed upon the breach with Rome under Henry VIII. One of its most notable features was the dissolution of the monasteries. As the result of the dissolution vast properties and extensive lands, which had been in the possession of the Church, passed into the hands of the Crown, and by the Crown were subsequently distributed among a number of private individuals, who owed their position in the country to royal favour, and much of their subsequent wealth and consequence to the abbey lands of which they at first became the lessees, and eventually the owners. It was the greatest revolution in the distribution of real property that England has ever seen. Among the religious foundations dissolved by Henry VIII which thus passed into secular use was the Premonstratensian house of Welbeck. What had been the premier establishment of the White Canons in England became the mansion of the great families of Cavendish, Holles, Harley, and Bentinck. None of the great houses which were thus transferred from religious to secular purposes in the sixteenth century has had more interesting associations or been more closely connected with the history of the country. It is with the establishment of the younger branch of the Cavendishes at Welbeck that the continuous family story of the house commences; but the Cavendishes were not the first occupants of Welbeck after the Dissolution, and their story has a short but not unimportant prologue.

The first figure in the prologue is that of Richard Whalley[1] of Shelford in the county of Nottingham, who on 26 February, 1539, received a grant by letters patent under

[1] In the appendix to M. Noble's *Memoirs of the Protectoral House of Cromwell* (2 vols., 1787), vol. ii, pp. 135-55, there is an account of the Whalley family.

the Great Seal of the site of Welbeck Abbey, of the church, steeple, churchyard, and watermill within the site, and of all the house and lands beneath the site of it, together with the two granges, called Bellers Grange and Hurst Grange, and several closes and pastures in the parish of Cuckney appertaining thereto.[1] Richard Whalley during his long life of eighty-four years played many parts. A man clearly of great energy and ambition, he was typical of those persons of enterprise and business capacity belonging to the upper middle class of the community who made themselves so useful to the Tudors, and who succeeded by their native wits in attaining both power and affluence; and, although only a minor figure in the history of the time, he was a good deal more than merely one of the numerous efficient cogs in the machinery of Tudor government. He was not simply a dim figure behind the scenes; he played a part upon the stage.

Whalley came of a family which is first heard of in Staffordshire, but his grandfather, Richard Whalley of Darlaston in that county had married Elizabeth, the daughter and heiress of Thomas Leak of Kirkton Hall, Screveton, in Nottinghamshire, of which his grandfather and his father—both named Thomas—had in consequence become the owners.[2] Richard, born in 1499, was educated at St. John's College, Cambridge. On leaving the university he went to Court, and here he distinguished himself by his grace and skill in martial exercises, and so attracted the attention of Thomas Cromwell, who as early as 1529 employed him in business connected with the dissolution of the smaller monasteries condemned by Cardinal Wolsey. Together with John Beaumont and others he carried

[1] P.R.O., Patent Roll, 26 Feb. 30 Henry VIII, pt. ii, m. 33. See also Thoroton's *History of Nottinghamshire*, with additions by J. Throsby (3 vols., 1797), vol. iii, p. 382.

[2] See *The Visitations of the County of Nottinghamshire in the years 1569 and 1614* (ed. G. W. Marshall, 1871), p. 117.

through a survey of the lesser monastic houses of Leicestershire.[1] In July, 1538, he was appointed to the commission of the peace for the North Riding of Yorkshire, and to this commission he was re-appointed in July, 1540, and again in February, 1545.[2] Whalley also practised the law, for we find him engaged as one of the counsel in the trial of the northern traitors at the York sessions in the latter year, and receiving twenty shillings for his services after the condemnation of the rebels.[3] Ere this he had begun to profit by the spoils of the disrupted abbeys. On 16 June, 1538, by letters patent there were granted to him and to his second son, William, the offices of steward and bailiff of all the lordships, manors, lands, and tenements in the vills of Willoughby, Wysall, Car Colston and Screveton in Nottinghamshire, formerly held by the priory of St. Cuthbert in Worksop. As we have already seen, in the following year he received the Welbeck Abbey grant; and in August, through the instrumentality of Robert Dighton, a jobber in the estates of dissolved monasteries, he secured Hardwick Grange in the parish of Worksop, together with appurtenances in Osberton, Hardwick and Worksop, all of which had belonged to Worksop Priory.[4] The accounts of the Court of Augmentations, which had been created to administer the revenues of the extinct religious houses, shew him receiving various rents and other payments.[5] On 4 July, 1545, he obtained as a reward of his services the wardenship of the college, or chantry, of St. Mary, Sibthorpe, together with appurtenances in Sibthorpe itself and various other places in Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire.[6]

[1] *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII, 1529-30*, pt. iii, pp. 2613, 2617, 2685.

[2] *Ibid.*, *1538*, pt. i, p. 566; *1540*, p. 470; *1545*, pt. i, p. 323.

[3] *Ibid.*, *1540-1*, p. 414.

[4] *Ibid.*, *1540*, p. 508.

[5] e.g. *ibid.*, *1540*, p. 563; *1540-1*, p. 359.

[6] *Ibid.*, *1545*, pt. i, p. 667.

In December, 1546, he received the rectory and advowson of the vicarage of Car Colston.[1] Much as he had got, Whalley always desired more. We find him writing to John Gates, in anticipation of the King's coming to stay at the house of the latter, asking him to forward his suit to his Majesty for some other lands which 'intermingled' with his own, and offering as a reward for his friendship in this matter the sum of 100 marks, for an earnest of which he forthwith sends by the hand of his servant a chain of fine gold worth £40. To this gift he also adds a few dainties—fine sugar loaves; he regrets that he cannot add a supply of quails, as he would have wished to do, but it was not possible to get any. He instructed Gates to offer as much as 100 marks to gain the King's favour, and to remember that the properties he now desired to obtain were mean things, incapable of improvement, which he would never have thought of had it not been for their contiguity with lands already in his possession.[2]

Prominent as he had been under Henry VIII, Whalley occupied a still more distinguished position in the following reign, acting together with Sir John Thynne as steward to Protector Somerset. He also became in October, 1547, Member of Parliament for Scarborough.[3] He had already been appointed, together with the Archbishop of York, Sir Michael Stanhope, and six others, to the commission to investigate the condition of the chantries and hospitals of the country, their lands, revenues and other properties, and he was made one of the seventeen crown receivers, his district being Yorkshire.[4] As before in his career, together with new appointments went an increase in his possessions,

[1] *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII, 1546*, pt. ii, p. 378.

[2] *Ibid.*, *Addenda*, vol. i, pt. ii, p. 348.

[3] *Official Return of Members of Parliament* (2 parts in 4 vols., 1878-91), part i, p. 377.

[4] *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII, 1546*, pt. i, pp. 28, 769.

and in April, 1549, he obtained the lodge of Mortlake and the manor of Wimbledon, which had formerly belonged to Katherine Parr.[1] But the good luck which had hitherto consistently attended the footsteps of Richard Whalley now became a good deal less constant, and he passed through several alarming vicissitudes of fortune. For, as he was closely identified with the interests of the Duke of Somerset, so his star waxed and waned with the Protector's influence. From the first the older nobility hated Somerset and resented the power exerted by one whom they regarded as an upstart; and the Earl of Warwick in particular was a formidable rival, seeking to oust him from his pre-eminent position in the state. Acute divisions arose in the Privy Council, and the situation came to a head in the autumn of 1549, when there appeared to be every risk of a civil war. At the beginning of October Somerset, in anticipation of a clash, was denuding the armoury at Hampton Court for the equipment of his followers, while Warwick and his other enemies in the Council, assembled at Ely Place in London, were commanding the Lord Mayor and aldermen to submit to their orders, and inciting the nobility and gentry of the country against the Protector, whom they accused of misgovernment, vaunting and ostentatious ambition. Faced by a formidable opposition, Somerset did not maintain a bold front for long. After a fruitless attempt at negotiation with Warwick, he consented to a warrant being issued under the King's hand for the Privy Council to meet formally at Windsor. On 13 October the Council proceeded to examine adherents of Somerset; next day they called the Protector himself before them, exhibiting against him twenty-eight charges of treason or misdemeanour, and they then consigned him to the Tower. A Bill of Pains and Penalties was passed against him in Parliament, and he was deprived both of his offices and of his personal property.

[1] *C.S.P.D., 1547-80*, p. 15.

Whalley was among those involved with his master. On 10 October an order was issued for his arrest; but when Sir Anthony Wingfield endeavoured to carry it out he found the bird flown. However, on 25 January, 1549/50, together with three other of Somerset's followers, he was haled before the Council and bound in recognizances of 1,000 marks.[1] It appears that subsequently Warwick made an attempt to win over Whalley, but the latter remained loyal to Somerset, and indeed engaged in a movement to restore him to power. Soon after his condemnation Somerset had been released from the Tower and sworn again of the Privy Council, and an ostensible reconciliation took place between him and the now all-powerful Warwick. But there could be no genuine amity between the rivals, and before the end of the year 1550 an intrigue had been set on foot for Somerset's reinstatement as Protector. It seems that Richard Whalley was the ringleader in this conspiracy, and apparently also at this time Somerset contemplated rewarding his faithful partisan by elevating him to the peerage with the title of Earl of Nottingham. But the plot was discovered, and on 16 February, 1551, the Earl of Rutland reported to the Council 'certain practicies and evill woordes used by Mr. Whalley verie seditiouse and of great importe'. In other words he accused Whalley of having persuaded certain nobles of the realm to make Somerset Protector again at the next Parliament.[2] Whalley denied the accusation, but was found culpable and committed to the Fleet prison. On 2 April he was bound in recognizances of £1,000 to appear from day to day and to

[1] *Acts of the Privy Council of England* (ed. J. R. Dasent), new series, vol. ii, p. 372.

[2] *Acts of the Privy Council of England*, n.s., vol. iii, p. 215; *Literary Remains of Edward VI* (Roxburghe Club, 2 vols., 1857), pp. 315, 353. See also Froude, *History of England* (12 vols., 1877), vol. v, p. 32.

abide such orders as the Lords should award. He was then discharged from the Fleet.[1]

Warwick had scotched the nascent design, but he still remained uneasy and on 16 October, a few days after he had obtained the dukedom of Northumberland for himself, he suddenly had Somerset arrested a second time on a charge of high treason and committed to the Tower. Two days later Whalley was also committed to the Tower for being confederate with Somerset in a conspiracy intended against the King's majesty and the estate of the realm.[2] He was repeatedly examined with a view to obtaining incriminating evidence against Somerset, who was on this occasion accused of having plotted to seize the King's person, to raise an insurrection in the city of London, to imprison Northumberland, and to assume the government of the country. At last in December the pressure applied to Whalley was effective, and he became one of the principal witnesses against his master.[3] He himself was not brought to trial, but he was kept in the Tower until the following June, only his wife and Walter Whalley, who acted as his deputy, having access to him.[4] He was forced to surrender the receivership which he had enjoyed since 1547, and he was heavily fined. So serious were his financial disabilities in consequence of the state to which he was reduced at this, the nadir of his fortunes, that he found it impossible to maintain all the numerous manors and other properties which he had so successfully amassed.[5] Released from the Tower in June, 1552, he was sent back on 20 September,[6]

[1] *Acts of the Privy Council*, n.s. vol. iii, p. 248.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 391.

[3] Brit. Mus., Harleian MSS. 2194, ff. 20-1.

[4] *Acts of the Privy Council*, n.s. vol. iii, p. 459; vol. iv, p. 31.

[5] E. Lodge, *Illustrations of British History* (3 vols., 1838), vol. i, p. 170.

[6] *Acts of the Privy Council*, n.s. vol. iv, p. 126.

this time charged with peculation as receiver for Yorkshire, to which crime he is said to have confessed; but confession in his circumstances is not necessarily a proof of guilt—he may well have felt that submission was his only feasible policy now that Somerset had been finally overthrown. The charge of peculation was a convenient one to bring against a political opponent who had been engaged in such financial business as that of the receivership; but Whalley's real crime was that he had sided with the Protector. Having backed the wrong horse he was made to suffer for his indiscretion.

Whalley's incarceration in the Tower lasted for the remainder of the reign of Edward VI, but he was released on the accession of Queen Mary. He now became involved in a prolonged dispute with one John Fyssher or Fisher, both of them claiming the receivership for Yorkshire, of which Whalley had been deprived on the charge of malversation. The matter came before the Council in September, 1553, and again in February, 1555/6. Eventually the Lords of the Council decided that by his own admission, and upon other evidence, it appeared clear that Whalley had surrendered the receivership in the late reign, and that he must therefore cease to intermeddle in the said office until he was able to bring forward some better proof of his being entitled to it, and that in the meantime Fisher should quietly enjoy the same.[1]

Whalley sat for East Grinstead in the Parliament of 1554, and in the following year became a Knight of the Shire for Nottinghamshire, so that he continued in public life despite the blows which he had sustained in the reign of Edward VI. But, as the result mainly of the heavy fine imposed upon him by the Northumberland party, he was much impoverished, his debts amounting to nearly £50,000, and he found it desirable to dispose of his manor

[1] *Acts of the Privy Council*, n.s. vol. iv, p. 337; vol. v, p. 238.

at Wimbledon and also of Welbeck, which he had made his home. Henceforth he lived, as he had done before the days of his prosperity, at Screveton, although in 1561 he obtained from Queen Elizabeth the manors of Hawkesworth, Taunton and Whotton, and other valuable lands subsequently, so that there was a considerable improvement in his fortunes during the latter years of his life, and notwithstanding his heavy losses he left a large fortune to his descendants.

Whalley married three times, and is said to have had no fewer than twenty-five children. He died on 23 November, 1583. A monument erected to him and his first two wives by his third wife, who survived him, stood in the south wall of the chancel of Screveton church, with the following lines above the figures:

> Beholde his wives were nomber thre
> Two of them died in right good fame
> The thirde this tombe erected she
> For him who well deserved the same
> Both for his life and godlie end
> Whiche all that knowes must neds comend
> Since time brings all things to an end
> And they that knowes not, yet may see
> A worthye Whallaye loe was he.[1]

It is obviously not possible from the fragmentary nature of our knowledge of him to form at all a detailed impression of the character of the first occupant of Welbeck after the dissolution of the Premonstratensian monastery. But at all events it is abundantly clear that he was a man of notable ability, inordinate energy, great ambition and determination, possessed in full measure of the acquisitiveness which marked so many forceful natures in the sixteenth century.

[1] See J. T. Godfrey, *Notes on the Churches of Nottinghamshire: Hundred of Bingham* (1907), p. 391. There is a photograph, opposite p. 392, of the Whalley monument, which, when the chancel of Screveton Church was restored in 1881, was removed to the tower.

The history of Welbeck from the time of Richard Whalley until the house and the lands adjoining came into the possession of the Cavendish family is somewhat obscure, since the records are few, and take the form mainly of leases and indentures. We have to fill in the gaps as best we can. We have seen that the serious financial embarrassments in which Richard Whalley became involved under Edward VI made it necessary for him to dispose of some of his property. A patent of the first year of Queen Elizabeth, 20 May, 1559, for the sum of £10 10s. 8d. paid into the hanaper, grants licence to Richard Whalley esquire of Welbeck, and to William Whalley, gentleman, to alienate the house and site of the dissolved monastery of Welbeck, now known as the demesne or manor of Welbeck, together with Bellers Grange, Hurst Grange, Gledthorpe Grange, and their appurtenances, together with the manor of Norton and Hardwick Grange and their appurtenances, and all messuages lying in the vills and parishes of Welbeck and Norton, to Edward Osborne, citizen, and clothworker, for himself and his heirs.[1]

The aforesaid Edward Osborne, who is thus brought for a brief space into the history of Welbeck, was one of the most prominent of the great merchants of Tudor London.[2] The son of Richard Osborne of Ashford, Kent, he married Alice, the daughter and sole heir of Sir William Hewett,[3] knight, who was Lord Mayor of London in 1559. He himself became Lord Mayor in 1583-4, and he was a Member of Parliament in 1586-7. He also became a governor of the

[1] P.R.O., Patent Roll I, Eliz. pt. i, m. 15/16, No. 47.

[2] See *D.N.B.*, vol. xlii, pp. 284-5. *Visitation of the County of Nottingham*, already cited, p. 31, for the genealogy of the family.

[3] Osborne's interest in Welbeck was probably due to his wife's family being associated with the neighbourhood. Thomas, the brother of Sir William Hewitt, purchased Shireoaks, near Worksop—an estate which remained in the family till 1811. See R. White, *Worksop, the Dukery and Sherwood Forest* (1875), p. 82.

Levant Company. The prosperous members of the great City companies in the sixteenth century, with their large financial resources and with the opportunities which the dissolution of the monasteries afforded for the acquisition of real property, often speculated in land, and this transaction may have been of the nature of a pure speculation. At all events, although the Osborne family came to be connected with Nottinghamshire, Welbeck did not remain in their possession, but returned into that of the Whalleys, only, however, to be handed over by them to others.

Fifteen years after the alienation of Welbeck to Edward Osborne, we find Queen Elizabeth by letters patent granting a lease of Welbeck to Richard Whalley for a period of thirty years. Only eighteen months of this new lease had run when he and his son Thomas, on 26 January, 1575, assigned it to Sir John Zowche, knight of Codnor in Derbyshire. He retained it for seven and a half years and then on 18 July, 1582, we find him, now described as Sir John Zouche of Alfreton in Derbyshire, handing back the lease to Thomas Whalley and his son, Richard, for the sum of £600.[1]

This younger Richard Whalley, though not playing a part in the history of his time such as his grandfather had done, was a man of substance and importance. His father had died the year before his grandfather, namely, in 1582, so that he succeeded immediately to most of the latter's property. He became Sheriff for the county of Nottingham, and sat in the Parliament of 1601 for Boroughbridge. The second of his three wives was Frances, the daughter of Sir Henry Cromwell of Hinchinbrook, the grandfather of Oliver, so that he was by marriage an uncle of the Protector, while his second son, Edward, was the well-known Colonel Whalley, who distinguished himself in the Civil War, was one of the judges at the trial of Charles I, was ap-

[1] This and the following lease are among the Welbeck muniments.

pointed one of Cromwell's Major-Generals in 1650, charged with the administration of Lincolnshire, Notts, Derbyshire, Warwickshire, and Leicestershire, and was subsequently made a member of the Upper House which was constituted under the terms of the *Humble Petition and Advice*.

Two years after the recovery of the lease of Welbeck from Sir John Zouche, the younger Whalley on 26 February in the twenty-sixth year of Queen Elizabeth (1584) assigned the remainder of it to Gilbert, Lord Talbot, the son of the sixth Earl of Shrewsbury. The lease had now rather over nineteen years to run. Lord Talbot evidently decided that the property should be held for the benefit of his wife, Mary, for there exists an acknowledgment by Sir Charles Cavendish and Thomas Markham, esquire of Bestood (i.e. Bestwood), Notts, that the lease has been allotted to them in trust for, and to the use of, Dame Mary Talbot.[1] The same Mary Talbot was the youngest daughter of the celebrated Bess of Hardwick, and sister of Sir Charles Cavendish. Thomas Markham, his fellow trustee, of Ollerton and Bestwood Park, was standard-bearer to Queen Elizabeth's band of gentlemen pensioners, Ranger of Sherwood Forest, and High Sheriff of Nottingham in 1577. Being of a very swarthy complexion he was known as 'Black Markham'. He died in 1606.[2] He is spoken of as the chief friend and councillor of Gilbert Talbot, when the latter succeeded to the earldom of Shrewsbury in 1590. Thus, Talbot's choice of Markham to act as co-trustee with his brother-in-law was a very natural one.

[1] The original documents are at Welbeck.

[2] For Thomas Markham see Sir Clements Markham, *Markham Memorials* (2 vols., 1913), vol. i, pp. 87-93. Better known than Sir Thomas was his eldest son, Sir Griffin Markham, who was involved in the Catholic conspiracy known as the Bye Plot or Watson's Plot of 1603. He was condemned to death, but reprieved. See H.M.C., *Salisbury MSS.*, vol. xv *passim*.

The document in which these names occur is the first in which the name of Cavendish is found in connection with Welbeck Abbey. But before we turn to the history of the Cavendishes and the Talbots it would be well to follow the further dispositions regarding the Welbeck property. The lease granted to Richard Whalley, the elder, in the fifteenth year of Queen Elizabeth was due to terminate on 16 July, 1603. Before that date a fresh beginning was made with a new patent under the Great Seal issued on 30 May, 1593. By this a lease for forty years, the term to begin on the expiration of the previous lease, was granted to William Waade, esquire, one of the Clerks of the Privy Council. Waade on 20 June following assigned his lease to Thomas Kerry of Basingstoke in the county of Southampton, esquire, and Kerry (here spelt Kery) transferred it on 3 July, 1597, to Gilbert Talbot, now Earl of Shrewsbury.[1] These arrangements made no effective difference, since Sir Charles Cavendish and Thomas Markham were still holding the estate in trust for the benefit of the Countess of Shrewsbury. However, on 4 July, the very day after he had acquired the new lease from Kerry, the Earl conveyed the remainder of it to Sir Charles Cavendish and the Lady Katherine his wife.[2] A patent issued under the Great Seal on 9 February, 42 Elizabeth (1600), after citing the lease granted to Waade, conferred the reversion of the estate upon Robert Booth esquire of Sheffield in the county of York, and to Randall Caterall, gentleman of Thornehill, in the same county, for the sum of £535 6s. 8d.[3] Randall Caterall, as we know from other sources, was a devoted

[1] The original document is at Welbeck. [2] *Ibid.*

[3] Original at Welbeck. See also *C.S.P.D.*, *1598-1601*, p. 387. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 506. In a petition from the inhabitants of Mansfield at the end of the reign of Elizabeth against the alienation of the manor to the Earl of Shrewsbury two followers of the Earl, William Hamond and Randall Caterall, are specially mentioned as concerned in securing the manor for him. See Brit. Mus., Add. MS. 24816.

follower of the Earl of Shrewsbury. It would seem that Booth and Caterall were simply acting as trustees in making this purchase, on the instructions of the Earl, and for the benefit of Sir Charles and Lady Cavendish. At any rate on 13 July, 1607, Robert Booth (signing himself Bouth) conveyed the estate to Henry Ogle, gentleman, and Thomas Byron, yeoman, both of Welbeck, to the use of Sir Charles Cavendish, his wife, and William Cavendish, his son and heir.[1] Now, Sir Charles Cavendish's wife was the younger daughter and co-heiress of Cuthbert, Lord Ogle, and Henry Ogle was a member of a collateral branch of her family, the Ogles of Kirkley.[2] What happened, therefore, was simply the conveyance of the estate from one trustee, Booth (Caterall presumably having died in the interval) to two other trustees, of whom one was a relative and the other merely a yeoman on the estate. The actual owners were Sir Charles and Lady Cavendish.

There was scarcely any estate in the country at this time of which there were not two owners, the legal and the equitable, so convenient was the system of uses found to be, partly for reasons of fear—because an equitable estate could not be forfeited for treason; partly for reasons of convenience—because of the cumbersome procedure of the common law, and the superior facilities provided by equity for the conveyance and testamentary disposition of estates.[3] For the famous Statute of Uses of 1535/6 did not abolish the system. While an endeavour was made by that legislation to prevent the fraudulent abuse of this method of dealing with real property, actually the power of land-

[1] The original document is at Welbeck. The first Duke of Newcastle wrote two sets of verses 'To the Memory of his most faithfull Servant and Cosin Mr Henry Ogle who dyed December 23, 1635, Aged 76 yeares'.

[2] See *History of Northumberland*, vol. xii (1926), pp. 501-5.

[3] See Sir W. Holdsworth, *History of English Law*, vol. iv, pp. 407-74.

owners to dispose of their estates was considerably increased. The prevalence of the system accounts for the intrusion of the names of Booth, Caterall, Ogle, and Byron in the documents relating to the transmission of Welbeck from the Whalleys to the Cavendishes. The important agents in this transmission were not these trustees, but the powerful Talbots; and that agency was exerted in their favour owing to the resolute will of that redoubtable woman, Bess of Hardwick, who was both the wife of George, sixth Earl of Shrewsbury, and the mother of Sir Charles Cavendish.

Chapter II

BESS OF HARDWICK, TALBOTS, AND CAVENDISHES

The old genealogists used to trace the origins of the Cavendish family to a certain Robert de Gernon. There are certainly Gernons mentioned in Domesday Book, who owned land in Essex and Suffolk. The manor of Cavendish Overhall was in Suffolk, in the neighbourhood of Bury St. Edmunds, and so not far from the Essex border of the county. There seems to be no other reason whatever—and no reason could be thinner—for associating the name of Gernon with that of Cavendish, and the previously accepted genealogy was exposed as fictitious as early as 1722.[1] The first noteworthy Cavendish of whom we have authentic information was Stephen Cavendish, alderman and mayor of London, who died in 1372. He and his father were both drapers, men of wealth, but having no connection with Suffolk. The other outstanding Cavendish in the Middle Ages was Sir John Cavendish, the Chief Justice of the King's Bench, to which office, after having been a serjeant and a judge of the Common Pleas, he was appointed in the year of Stephen Cavendish's death. There is no proof of any connection between these two persons, though

[1] By Thomas Ruggles. See also the typically mordant article on 'The Origins of the Cavendishes' in J. H. Round's *Family Origins and Other Studies* (1930), p. 22. The traditional story will be found in Arthur Collins, *Historical Collections of the Noble Families of Cavendishe, Hollis, Vere, Harley, and Ogle* (1752), pp. 1-5.

it is at least possible that they were of the same family; on the other hand, there certainly is a connection between John Cavendish and Cavendish Overhall in Suffolk, for he purchased the manor from one John d'Oddingselles in 1359. In the year 1381 he was one of the victims of the Peasants' Revolt. He was unpopular because he had been endeavouring to enforce the Statute of Labourers. The Suffolk insurgents resolved to attack Cavendish Overhall. The Chief Justice, anticipating trouble, fled towards Ely. The mob duly sacked the manor, and subsequently caught the judge just as he was on the point of making his escape across the river Brandon, and murdered him. There is a tradition that the man who slew Wat Tyler at Smithfield was John Cavendish, a son of the Lord Chief Justice, and that the murder of the latter was a reprisal for the death of the rebels' leader. But the chronology of this picturesque version is at fault, since Sir John was killed the day before Wat Tyler.

We may pass to the sixteenth century—to Thomas Cavendish, Clerk of the Pipe, who increased the family's estate in Suffolk, and held lands in other counties as well. He left three sons—George, William, and Thomas. George, the eldest, entered the service of Cardinal Wolsey as gentleman usher; remained his faithful servant throughout his career, during his days of power and in his later abasement; and was present at the Cardinal's death-bed. He performed a more important act of devotion afterwards in becoming Wolsey's admiring biographer.[1]

It has been said, 'Some strain of an older chivalry made George Cavendish, in an age of materialism, stand by a losing cause and honour an unloved memory. No such

[1] The authorship of the life of Wolsey used to be attributed to William Cavendish—as it is, for example, by Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 7. John Hunter in his *Who wrote Cavendish's Life of Wolsey?* (1814) shewed that George Cavendish was the author.

troublesome element went to the composition of the younger brother. William Cavendish fitted his age well.'[1] It may fairly be assumed that William owed his start on the road to fortune to the good offices of George. He entered the household of the statesman who was to succeed the great Cardinal in influence and authority, namely, Thomas Cromwell. Cromwell's name is intimately associated with the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII; and to the business connected with it William Cavendish, an indefatigable coadjutor, in large measure owed his advancement and prosperity. He was one of the commissioners appointed to visit, and take the surrender of, certain religious houses, and in April, 1536, he became one of the auditors of the Court of Augmentations. Several monastic lands came into his own possession—some of those formerly held in Hertfordshire by the Abbey of St. Albans, and also Lilleshall Abbey in Shropshire, of which he obtained a lease. In 1540 he was employed in Ireland in a survey of the Crown lands. Six years later he was appointed Treasurer of the King's Chamber. Soon after—rewards for many highly efficient services—came a knighthood and admission to the Privy Council. It is a high tribute to his utility as a public servant, and to his adaptability, that the accession of Queen Mary and the restoration of Roman Catholicism in England did not prove in any way prejudicial to his career. Both by Edward VI and Mary he was continued in his office as Treasurer and in his membership of the Privy Council.

It is obvious that William Cavendish owed nothing to his ancestry. His success in life was due entirely to his own ability and to his own exertions, together with the special opportunities which the Tudor system of government afforded to men of his type. But if we are seeking for the

[1] By Francis Bickley in his useful and interesting sketch: *The Cavendish Family* (1911), p. 11.

Sir William Cavendish, c. 1505–57
by permission of the late Duke of Devonshire, K.G.

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origin of the future greatness of the house of Cavendish we should turn neither to Stephen Cavendish nor to Sir John Cavendish in the fourteenth century, nor even to William Cavendish, the indefatigable lieutenant of Thomas Cromwell: we should go rather to the extraordinary woman whom he espoused on 20 August, 1547—for, undoubtedly, of all William Cavendish's successful enterprises the most successful was his marriage. His bride was a young woman of thirty, the widow of a certain Robert Barlow. 'This beautiful and discreet woman', as Bishop White Kennett[1] calls Elizabeth Hardwick,[2] the fourth daughter of a Derbyshire squire, did not appear in her maiden days to have much prospect of a distinguished career, more especially as she was left very poorly off with a dowry of only forty marks when her father died. But her good looks attracted the attention of Mr. Barlow, and her remarkable wits and force of character did the rest. Mr. Barlow was everything that his wife could have desired, for he was wealthy; he was devoted to his wife; and he was short-lived. When he died he was found to have left everything to his widow.

We need not concern ourselves with the public career of William Cavendish after his marriage to the famous Bess of Hardwick. She speedily took command, and it is with the 'hopeful Number of Sons and Daughters',[3] by her second husband, and the arrangements which she made for their welfare, that we have to deal. She had eight children by William Cavendish, of whom three sons and three daughters survived. Very distinguished persons appeared as sponsors at the baptisms of these children, including Gardiner, the Bishop of Winchester, the Ladies Jane and

[1] *A Sermon Preach'd at the Funeral of the Right Noble William Duke of Devonshire . . . with some Memoirs of the Family of Cavendish*, by White Kennett (1708).

[2] There is a biography by Mrs. M. S. Rawson, entitled *Bess of Hardwick and her Circle* (1910).

[3] White Kennett, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

Catherine Grey, Queen Mary herself, and various of the greater nobles. The Cavendishes had been connected with East Anglia. Bess had no interest in the east of England; her heart was in her own country of Derbyshire and in the Midlands, and the acquisition of property in that part of the country was her consistent and devouring ambition throughout her long and eventful life. She was already, when she married Cavendish, co-heir with her brother Arthur of certain Hardwick estates. These she soon augmented, for she induced her husband to sell most of his lands, and to buy others where she wanted them. Among the new purchases was that of Chatsworth.[1]

William Cavendish died on 25 October, 1557. Again the fair Elizabeth did not remain a widow for long. She now married a widower, Sir William St. Loe, who was a captain of the Queen's Guard and Grand Butler of England. There can be no doubt that St. Loe was entirely captivated by the charms of Bess—his doting letters suggest that he was her willing slave. He writes to her, 'My owne, more dearer to me than I am to mysylf', 'My honest swete Chatsworth', and he signs himself, 'yowre loving husband wyth akeng hartt untyll we mete'.[2] Let us note that Bess was certainly capable of inspiring perfectly genuine and profound affection. She could also inspire very different emotions, as we shall see presently. St. Loe was the owner of a good deal of land in Gloucestershire. Bess, having had no children of her third marriage, induced him to settle all his property on her and her Cavendish children, in spite of the fact that he had children of his own by his former wife. St. Loe's relations were deeply incensed, as well they might be. An influence which could bring to pass an arrangement so manifestly iniquitous, must, it seemed to them, itself be iniquitous. But the redoubtable Lady St.

[1] Collins, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.

[2] See J. Hunter, *Hallamshire* (ed. Gatty, n.d.), p. 108.

Loe was probably but little perturbed by such censure. Criticism of her motives and of her actions often moved her to righteous wrath and indignation, but it never deflected her from her course.

St. Loe, like Barlow, enjoyed the felicities of Elizabeth Hardwick's companionship for only a short while, and again, when she became a widow for the third time, Elizabeth did not remain a widow long. She was now fifty, but to use the words of Dr. White Kennett, 'she had not survived her Charms of Wit and Beauty, by which she captured the then greatest subject of the Realm, George, Earl of Shrewsbury, whom she brought to Terms of the greatest Honour and Advantage to herself and Children'.[1] In later life the Earl of Shrewsbury bitterly cursed 'the evil day' on which this marriage took place; but it is obvious that at the time he was as submissive, as anxious to do the lady's will, as the excellent Sir William St. Loe had been. For she stipulated that he should give his daughter Grace, by his first wife, in marriage to her eldest son Henry, and that her youngest daughter should marry his second son, Gilbert, his eldest son being married already. Thus she forged a triple link between the houses of Talbot and Cavendish. The success of her manœuvres was greater than she could possibly have foreseen: Gilbert's elder brother died, and thus Mary Cavendish in due course became Countess of Shrewsbury when her mother became the Dowager.

At first, Shrewsbury being apparently as deeply enamoured as his predecessor, the relations between husband and wife were of the happiest, and his letters are as full of endearments as St. Loe's had been. Never, he assured her, had he known such love before. 'My dere none',[2] he writes to her upon one occasion, 'of all joys I have under God the

[1] White Kennett, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

[2] None = mine own.

gretest is your selfe.' To have a wife so faithful and one who loves him so dearly 'is all & the greatest comforte that this yerth can give. Therefore God gyve me grace to be thankful to him for his goodness showed unto me.' He signs himself 'your faithfull husbaunde tyll my Ende'. On another occasion, she being at her favourite Chatsworth, he at Sheffield, the fact of not hearing from her for some time drove him 'in dumpes'. But she sent him presents of the kinds of food which he most liked. He thanked his 'swęte none' for her 'podings and venyson', and again for her capons, and 'chefest of all for remembering me'.[1] The most blissful contentment reigned; and the relations between the Earl and his new Countess might perhaps have continued perfectly blissful for years to come, had it not been for the sudden invasion of an entirely unexpected and highly disturbing element into their household.

Mary Queen of Scots, in her precipitate flight after the defeat of Langside, crossed the Solway Firth on 16 May, 1568, and made her way to Carlisle. Thence she was carried to the somewhat bleak hospitality of Bolton Castle in Wensleydale. After she had been there for a while, it seemed to Queen Elizabeth expedient to remove her to a clime somewhat less rigorous and (a still more important consideration) farther from the Scottish border. Shrewsbury conveyed the news to the Countess in these words: 'Now it is sarten the Scotes Queene comes to Tutburye to my charge.'[2] Tutbury Castle was a stronghold owned by the Earl of Shrewsbury on the river Dove in Staffordshire. Why had Elizabeth chosen Shrewsbury to be Mary's gaoler? Partly because he was a powerful nobleman, possessed of several castles in his great estates; still more because, unlike a good many other powerful noblemen, she felt that she could trust him, that he was not likely either

[1] Hunter, *Hallamshire*, pp. 109, 112.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 109-10.

to be overawed by his royal guest or led astray by her blandishments.[1] After a long winter journey, Queen Mary reached Tutbury on 2 February, 1569.

For over fifteen years the Scottish queen remained in Shrewsbury's custody, and a responsibility which the Earl no doubt had originally thought likely to last only a few months must have come to seem interminable. It must have been a severe strain upon him; it proved too much of a strain for his wife. Mary did not remain long at Tutbury: for most of her virtual incarceration she was housed at Sheffield Castle, but occasionally she was removed to Wingfield, to Buxton, to Chatsworth. Shrewsbury naturally grew uneasy at the indefinite protraction of his duties as guardian and prayed to be released; but Elizabeth, though not always completely satisfied with his performance of them, did not until August, 1584, allow him to hand over his charge to Sir Ralph Sadler. Even then his responsibilities in connection with the Queen of Scots were not at an end, for he was present at her trial at Fotheringhay in October, 1586, and at her execution in February, 1587.

Long before the termination of Shrewsbury's guardianship over Mary Queen of Scots, she, together with the Countess's extreme devotion to Chatsworth, had brought disturbance into the Talbot household. Discord began to shew itself before the end of 1575, and serious trouble arose in the year 1577. The Countess was engaged in extensive building operations at Chatsworth; it seemed that nothing would induce her to leave the place, and that she preferred the society of stone-masons to that of her husband. She was very anxious that he should obtain the Queen's leave to bring his involuntary guest and spend the entire summer at Chatsworth—'It cannot be but that you shall have the Queen's consent to remove thither,' she

[1] For the instructions given to Shrewsbury regarding Mary, see H.M.C., *Salisbury MSS.*, vol. i, pp. 401, 419.

wrote; but she was evidently determined that whether he did so or not, she would herself remain there. In a postscript she added: 'Lette me here how you, your charge and love dothe, and commende me I pray you.' Was this the beginning of jealousy? For a time the Earl did nothing in response to this appeal, but it appears that he did pay a fleeting visit to Chatsworth that summer.[1]

Gilbert Talbot, who was inclined to side with his stepmother mother-in-law against his father, did, however, make some attempt to mediate between the two. Once, arriving at his castle of Bolsover, Shrewsbury made enquiries concerning his wife. Gilbert answered that she was 'as grieved in mind as ever he had seen a woman in his life'; she had told him that his father was vehemently offended with her, and shewed both by word and deed anger and evil will towards her, and that she felt that 'all his wonted love and affection is cleane turned to the contrarye'. The Earl then complained that the Countess 'hathe such a sorte of varlets aboute her as never restethe carryinge of tales'. He then asked where her ladyship was. Gilbert had to confess that she had left Sheffield Castle only that very morning and betaken herself to Chatsworth. 'Whereuppon he seemed to marvayle greatly, & said, "is her malice suche she woulde not tarrye one nyght for my cuminge"?' All the house might discern her ladyship's 'stomake against him' by her not waiting for his arrival. Gilbert told his father that the Countess had urgent business at Chatsworth; 'but he allowed not of any reason or cause, but was exceedinge angrye for the same'. Gilbert tried to persuade his father that the Countess was still devoted to him, but that he had made her feel that he 'was gladder of her absence than her presence'. 'Gilbert,' retorted the Earl, 'you know the contrarye; and how often I

[1] Hunter, *op. cit.*, p. 93; E. Lodge, *Illustrations of British History*, vol. ii, pp. 90, 93-6.

have curced the buyldinge at Chatsworth for wante of her companye.'[1]

The trouble between husband and wife came to a head in 1583. White Kennett writes:

> 'The Earl's own epitaph does betray that he was suspected of familiarity with his Royal Prisoner, *quod a malevolis propter suspectam cum captiva Regina familiaritatem saepius male audivit*, which is not to be imagined true: However, the Rumour of it was no doubt an Exercise of Temper and Virtue to the Countess'.

He adds that she, however, carried herself, both towards the Queen and her husband, 'with all becoming Respect and Duty'.[2] Whether the Countess's jealousy was genuine or simply feigned and vindictive, she certainly made no secret of it in 1583. She expressed it to Queen Elizabeth herself. One has to admit that she had good reason—as indeed her husband also had—for feeling some resentment at the indefinite prolongation of the Scottish queen's stay in Talbot residences. She now began to wreak her indignation upon Mary herself, who, in the autumn of 1584, complained bitterly that the Countess heaped intolerable insults upon her, and that she, together with William and Charles Cavendish, was industriously spreading the most vile and scandalous stories of the Queen misconducting herself with the Earl.[3] It is manifest that the situation had become intolerable for all parties, and it was no doubt in recognition of this fact that Queen Elizabeth at long last agreed to remove Mary into some one else's keeping.

[1] Hunter, *op. cit.*, pp. 88, 115-16.

[2] White Kennett, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-1.

[3] A. Labanoff, *Lettres de Marie Stuart* (7 vols., 1844), vol. v, pp. 389, 395-6, 426, 462; vol. vi, pp. 37-9, 45-6, 51-7. See also J. D. Leader, *Mary Queen of Scots in Captivity, 1569-1584* (1880), pp. 547-91.

Queen Mary attributed all these troubles to the Countess of Shrewsbury's overweening ambition. Long ere this that ambition had led her into serious trouble. Nine years before, in October, 1574, when Margaret, Countess of Lennox, and her son, Charles Stuart, the younger brother of Darnley, had been journeying from London northwards, they had been entertained for five days by the Countess at Rufford. She had recently been disappointed in the non-fulfilment of a scheme for disposing of her second daughter, Elizabeth, in marriage. Acting with great daring, skill, and promptitude, she used those five short days to carry out a magnificent *coup*. She arranged for Elizabeth an alliance infinitely more splendid than she had previously contemplated, for she married her off to Charles Stuart, who as a descendant of Henry VII, and an uncle of Mary, Queen of Scots, had a possible claim to the English throne.

The Queen of England was furious at this unparalleled presumption. The Earl of Shrewsbury was aghast at his wife's temerity, and in a letter to Lord Burghley shewed great alacrity to disclaim all responsibility for her misbehaviour. Her match-making propensities were so great, he said, that she was really uncontrollable. To the Queen herself he wrote to say that the matter had been arranged suddenly without his knowledge; but he had the grace to add in excuse for his wife that he dared 'undertake and insure' to her Majesty that, finding the young man was inclined to love on only a few days' acquaintance, she had done her best to further her daughter in the match, 'without having therein any other intent or respect than with reverent duty towards your Ma^te^, she owyth'.[1] No excuse availed with the indignant Queen of England, who felt it to be an outrage that any subject of hers should in this light-hearted fashion arrange an alliance with royalty. The scheming Countess was given ample time to reflect upon

[1] Lodge, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 43-5, 48.

George Talbot, 6th Earl of Shrewsbury, c. 1522–90

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her audacity during three months' seclusion in the Tower of London. But if Bess of Hardwick could be made to expiate, not even the Queen could undo the marriage. A child was born of it—the luckless Arabella Stuart,[1] whose possible claim to the throne made her an object of suspicion, first to Elizabeth, and later to James I. If she at times basked in the sun of royal favour, she more often did not; and her security depended upon her observance of severe restrictions upon her liberty of movement and action, which, as we shall see, were at one time enforced through the agency of her own grandmother.

The episode of the Lennox-Cavendish marriage is an indication of how small was the control which the Earl of Shrewsbury exercised over his headstrong wife even as early as 1574, and how illimitable were her ambitions for her Cavendish children. One is really surprised at Queen Elizabeth's lenience. The husband is engaged in keeping in safe custody the Queen of Scots, because her possible claim to the English throne, and the likelihood of plots in her favour, made her dangerous; the wife meanwhile arranges a Stuart marriage, which precipitates another possible claim to the English throne with the birth of Arabella!

The removal of Queen Mary from Shrewsbury's charge did not bring peace in his household. His 'very wicked and malicious wife', as the Earl now terms her, having, as we have already seen, developed the irritating habit of paying visits to Chatsworth without his knowledge and sanction, now definitely migrated to her favourite abode, taking with her some of her husband's belongings.[2] He complained that she was guilty of pure robbery; she alleged that he had

[1] Arabella's mother, already a widow, had died in 1582. On 21 January Shrewsbury wrote to Mr. Secretary Walsingham craving the royal favour upon the infant orphan. *C.S.P.D., 1581-90*, p. 42.

[2] *C.S.P.D., 1581-90*, p. 192: Shrewsbury to Walsingham, 26 July, 1584.

been guilty of ill-treating her.[1] The estrangement reached its height in a furious and protracted dispute over a deed of gift which the Earl had made of some of his lands to William and Charles Cavendish. On the ground that she and they had been misappropriating his property he proceeded to revoke the deed. He maintained that he was perfectly entitled to withdraw the gift if he saw reason to do so; the Countess and her two younger sons, on the contrary, argued that it was irrevocable. Had the nature of the deed been the sole matter in dispute, it should have been possible to settle it easily by a decision in a court of law. But the disagreement was more complicated than that. When revoking the deed, Shrewsbury had taken possession of certain lands to which the Cavendishes held he had no manner of right, even presuming his own view of the instrument to be valid, for the lands which he had thus appropriated included estates which had come to the Countess from Barlow and St. Loe as well as from Cavendish, and some also which she had herself purchased. The property belonging to the Countess had come to her from so many different sources that the Earl may himself have been somewhat doubtful as to what he could and what he could not dispose of.[2]

The contention between the Earl, who was supported by the elder of the three Cavendish brothers, Henry (no doubt because he felt his mother had treated him very cavalierly) and the Countess, supported by her other two sons and by Gilbert Talbot, was embittered and prolonged. There was a great deal of recrimination and abuse on both sides. The Earl complained that his wife 'called him knave, fool, and beast to his face, and mocked and mowed at him'; he told

[1] *C.S.P.D., 1581-90*, p. 193: Countess to Burghley, 10 Aug.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 454-5. There is a clear account of the stages in the quarrel in Bickley, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-5, and in Rawson, *op. cit.*, pp. 193-307.

her very bluntly that she had been a nobody but for him,[1] 'There is no creature more happy and more fortunate than you have been for, when you were defamed, and to the world a by-word, when you were St. Loe's widow, I covered those imperfections (by my intermarriage with you) and brought you to all the honour you have, and to most of that wealth you now enjoy.'[2] There was a good deal of violent action as well as violent language. On one occasion William Cavendish, with halberd in hand and pistol under his girdle, forcibly barred his step-father's entrance to Chatsworth, while the latter did a good deal of wanton and ill-tempered damage to the house and its grounds.[3]

It was ordered that the case should be tried by the Lord Treasurer and two Chief Justices. Month followed month, and yet the dispute was not settled. All parties to it must have become heartily weary before its termination: certainly Queen Elizabeth grew tired. Shrewsbury in a letter to Lord Burghley, written on 23 May, 1586, said he greatly appreciated a remark made by the Queen, that the quarrel with his wife and her two younger sons must 'greatly trouble and disgust his old years', and that 'the Queen of England doth desire his quietness'.[4] Still the haggling continued. The Earl demanded the return of plate which he alleged the Countess had unlawfully appropriated. His termagant wife in haughty tones expressed her astonishment that so great and rich a nobleman should require such trifles of her, his wife for nineteen years. If he wanted the return of household things which he had given her, there were also household things that she had given him—pots, chafing dishes, porringers, warming pans, boiling pots, mattresses, quilts, better than £1,000 worth of

[1] *C.S.P.D., 1581-90*, pp. 451-5.
[2] H.M.C., *Salisbury MSS.*, vol. iii, pp. 163-5, 4 Aug., 1586.
[3] *C.S.P.D., 1581-90*, p. 453.
[4] *Salisbury MSS.*, vol. iii, p. 142.

linen.[1] Eventually the Queen herself intervened, and settled the matter of the disputed lands; Shrewsbury was to content himself with an income of £500 a year from them, so that the decision was mainly in the Countess's favour. An order was drawn up to this effect.[2]

But while the dispute might be settled, it was a more difficult matter to bring about a reconciliation between husband and wife after so many years of discord, for the Earl declared that he could no longer share a roof with one who had ill-used him so vilely with her tongue, calling him 'knave, fool, and beast to his face', and who had 'mocked and mowed at him'. The Queen insisted that the Earl and Countess should come together in her presence, and outwardly there was a reunion;[3] but the estrangement had been too complete to be really healed. Nor in any case was much time vouchsafed for the restoration of happiness, for George, Earl of Shrewsbury, died on 18 November, 1590, at Sheffield.

Francis, the Earl's eldest son, had died without issue, so that Gilbert Talbot succeeded to the title. He and Bess of Hardwick had acted in concert during his father's lifetime, but their harmonious relations were now speedily broken by a violent quarrel over the late Earl's will.[4] This dispute was embittered by differences regarding Arabella Stuart. Arabella's mother had died in 1582, when the former was a small child; and she was left under the protection of her grandmother, and of Gilbert Talbot and his wife. Arabella was at first well received at Court; but she became a centre for intrigue, especially among the Catholics, and Elizabeth

[1] *Salisbury MSS.*, vol. iii, pp. 158-61.

[2] *C.S.P.D., 1581-90*, p. 250: Earl of Leicester to Countess of Shrewsbury, 12 July, 1585.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 451, 454.

[4] For Bess of Hardwick's complaints that Gilbert was depriving her of property that was hers or her children's, see *C.S.P.D., 1591-4*, p. 11; *Salisbury MSS.*, vol. x, p. 172.

decided that, however innocent the young girl herself might be, it was not safe to allow her to remain in London. So she was sent back to Derbyshire in 1590. Mary, the new Countess of Shrewsbury, was an adherent of the old religion, and her mother, having become a bitter enemy of the new Earl over the question of the execution of the will, now became an enemy of her own daughter, persuading herself that the latter exerted an influence over Arabella, dangerous both to the girl and to the country. Queen Elizabeth could have desired no more potent ally. The Dowager Countess became no better than her granddaughter's very efficient gaoler.

Arabella attempted to escape from her Hardwick prison-house. There had been some suggestions previously that she might marry William Seymour, grandson of the Earl of Hertford, and she herself now entered into communication with the Seymours. Henry Cavendish acted in concert with them, and collected a band of forty men to rescue her; but the Dowager was too vigilant for them. She frustrated this design, and its only result was that she disinherited Henry, with whom she was already at variance, and also cut out Arabella from any share in her inheritance.[1] The further lamentable history of Arabella hardly concerns us. For a short time on the accession of James I she was in favour at Court; but, most unfortunately for her, it was part of the so-called Main Plot, concocted by Lord Cobham in 1603, to place her upon the throne of England. This was a Catholic plot, and at once the Catholic associates of Arabella were under suspicion—in particular the young Countess of Shrewsbury once again.[2] In 1611 Arabella agreed to marry William Seymour, with whom she had probably been for some time genuinely in love. The King

[1] For the connection of Henry Cavendish with the affairs of Lady Arabella see *Salisbury MSS.*, vol. xi, pp. 583-696 *passim.*

[2] *C.S.P.D. 1611-18*, p. 48.

was greatly alarmed: on no account must the dangerous Arabella be allowed to marry, and so become more dangerous still. To escape imprisonment the lovers promised obedience. Then came the news that despite their promise they had been married in secret. Arabella was confined at Highgate; Seymour in the Tower. Both succeeded in escaping; both were recaptured. Arabella was now placed in the Tower, and the Countess of Shrewsbury was sent there too. Arabella never emerged, but, a victim of grief and eventually of insanity, died there in 1615.

The chief significance for us of the sad eventful story of Arabella Stuart is that it completed the alienation of Bess of Hardwick from her first-born; the greatness of the house of Cavendish lay in other hands. Indeed Henry made little mark. It is true that he sat in six Parliaments for Derbyshire, but he was often abroad, and he left no children born in lawful wedlock. The makers of the greatness of the house of Cavendish after Bess of Hardwick were, then, his younger brothers, William and Charles. Bess survived her last husband for seventeen years. White Kennett, in enumerating the 'change of conditions' which she experienced and 'that perhaps never fell to any one Woman' before or since, triumphantly ends his catalogue with the fact that she lived 'seventeen years a Widow in absolute Power and Plenty'.[1] These years she devoted principally to those building operations which were her greatest passion. She completed the great quadrangular building of Chatsworth with its towers and courts; Hardwick Hall was built between 1576 and 1599; she put some of her energies into the extension of the magnificent manor house at Worksop, which had been begun by the fourth Earl of Shrewsbury in the reign of Henry VIII; and another of her buildings was Oldcotes. There is a well-known story that Bess of Hardwick's insatiable love of building was due to the fact that

[1] White Kennett, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

when she was a young girl a gipsy prophesied that so long as she went on building she would not die. At last in the beginning of 1608 there came a very hard frost which forced the masons entirely to suspend their work—some say on Oldcotes, some on the rebuilding of Bolsover Castle, the property of the Earl of Shrewsbury—and true it is that Bess of Hardwick died on 13 February, 1608, in her eighty-seventh year.

She had already erected a splendid monument to be a memorial of herself in All Saints' Church, Derby, where she was buried. The inscription[1] upon it is less familiar than the epitaph which Horace Walpole wrote in the wide margin of Arthur Collins' *Historical Collections of the Noble Families of Cavendishe, Holles, Vere, Harley, and Ogle:*

Four times the nuptial bed she warm'd,
And every time so well perform'd,
That when death spoiled each Husband's billing,
He left the Widow every shilling.[2]
Sad was the dame, but not dejected;
Five stately Mansions she erected
With more than Royal pomp, to vary
The prison of her Captive Mary.
When Hardwick's tow'rs shall bow their head,
Nor Mass be more in Worksop said;
When Bolsover's fair fame shall tend,
Like Oldcotes, to its mould'ring end;
When Chatsworth tastes no Candish bounties,
Let fame forget this costly Countess.[3]

No one will pretend that Bess of Hardwick was at all an attractive character. Proud, imperious, selfish, unfeeling, determined, and relentless, she was essentially as hard as

[1] See Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

[2] Certainly not true of her last husband.

[3] See *Letters of Horace Walpole* (ed. Toynbee, 16 vols., 1903-5), vol. iv, p. 425.

granite,[1] although obviously in her younger days she must have possessed attractions which won for her devoted affection. But clearly she was a woman of extraordinary strength of character and fixity of purpose, and her personality and her achievements are deeply stamped upon the history of the house of Cavendish.

William Cavendish had latterly been his mother's favourite son. He had taken her side, both against the sixth Earl of Shrewsbury, and, after his accession to the title, against the seventh Earl also; he had indeed been closely associated with her in all her enterprises. In 1580 he had been knighted; in 1605 he was raised to the peerage as Lord Cavendish of Chatsworth. On 7 August, 1618, at Salisbury, King James conferred the further honour upon him of the earldom of Devonshire. It is said that he gave £10,000 for the dignity—during the venal reign of James I it was virtually impossible to get a title of any kind without paying for it; but William Cavendish could well afford to pay heavily, as the owner of Chatsworth, Hardwick, Oldcotes, and other lands in Derbyshire. From him the long line of Earls, and subsequently Dukes of, Devonshire is descended.

It is Charles, the youngest of Bess of Hardwick's three sons, who is important in the history of Welbeck. He was born on 28 November, 1552. The first episode in his career of which we have record is his taking advantage of his mother's absence from home to join some of the servants in a poaching expedition. His step-father desired his wife 'to advise him from those doings, lest som myshappe myght come thereby, to his harme and your grefe'.[2] It was the Earl's opinion that Charles was 'esely ledd to folly'. And no doubt, as he persistently took his mother's side in

[1] Professor J. E. Neale, *Queen Elizabeth* (1934), p. 259, describes her as 'an incorrigible intriguer with the tongue of an adder'.

[2] Hunter, *Hallamshire*, p. 124 and *n.*

Sir Charles Cavendish, 1553–1617
from a painting by D. Mytens

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the family quarrels, Shrewsbury considered that subsequent experience proved that his early impressions had been only too well justified. But while Charles was all that his mother could wish during the lifetime of her husband, unlike the admirable William he did not support her afterwards. He had been brought up with Gilbert Talbot and they had travelled abroad together. This friendship continued unabated when Gilbert succeeded to the earldom, and Charles remained on the closest terms with Gilbert and with Mary. Thus his fortune owed more to them than to his mother. As we have already seen, he acquired Welbeck from the Talbots. The lease which Gilbert had obtained from the younger Richard Whalley in February, 1584, was held in trust for Mary by Charles Cavendish and Thomas Markham; and the second lease which Gilbert, now Earl of Shrewsbury, obtained in 1597 was made over instantly to Charles Cavendish and his wife; indeed it was obviously taken over expressly for their benefit.[1]

The seventh Earl of Shrewsbury was evidently a man of ungovernable temper and violence. He was at variance with his own family and with many of his neighbours. Most of all he seems to have hated his younger brother Edward. In June, 1594, he wrote to him, calling him a liar and challenging him to a duel with rapiers and daggers. Edward refused to fight, and instead intrigued against the Earl. Gilbert was also on bad terms with his tenantry, and in this same year the Lord Keeper had to intervene on their behalf. But the most bitter of all the animosities entertained by this exceedingly turbulent nobleman was against his neighbours, the Wortleys and Stanhopes, his anger against them being due to the most trivial causes.[2] Into this vendetta Charles Cavendish was drawn. In 1578

[1] See *supra*, p. 16.

[2] For the quarrel with the Stanhopes see Brit. Mus., Harleian MSS. 6995, 6996.

he had commanded troops in the Netherlands; in 1582 he had been knighted, and he sat in three Parliaments during the reign of Elizabeth. This is all we know of his public life. Much of his private life was dominated by his intimacy with Gilbert Talbot, over whom he seems to have gained great influence. He was, we are told, 'always at his elbow, politic, and having great sway with him'.[1] This intimacy and its result—the hostility of the Stanhopes—very nearly had fatal consequences for him. Out riding on the morning of 9 June, 1599, accompanied only by two relations by marriage, Harry and Launcelot Ogle, and a groom, he espied some twenty horsemen on the slope of a hill opposite. At first he took them to be a hunting party with Sir John Byron; but suddenly the strangers galloped across, and launched an attack upon him and his tiny retinue. By ill luck his horse stumbled and fell; and before he could regain it, or had time to draw his sword, two pistols were discharged at him and he was hit by small shot in several places on his body, his thigh, his head, and his hand. Notwithstanding these injuries, and the great disadvantage he was in by reason of the complete unexpectedness of the encounter, and the fact that he and his companions were armed only with rapiers and daggers, he laid about him with such tremendous vigour that six of the Stanhope party were unhorsed, two were killed outright, and two others severely wounded. In this truly Homeric encounter Charles Cavendish proved that he was indeed one of the finest swordsmen of the day, as he was also one of its finest horsemen. The attackers were driven off, leaving behind them several good horses, two or three cloaks, some hats, a sword, two rapiers, and a dagger. The victors counted their spoils with particularity and pride.[2]

[1] See *C.S.P.D., 1591-4*, p. 174.

[2] For accounts of the fight see *C.S.P.D., 1596-1601*, p. 222; *Salisbury MSS.*, vol. ix, p. 246.

News of the affray was brought to the ears of Queen Elizabeth and her Council, and strict injunctions were issued to both parties that there was to be no further breach of the peace. If there were, those responsible would answer for it at their peril. But as the Stanhopes had been the aggressors, the High Sheriff of Derbyshire was ordered to take good security of John Stanhope, and sufficient sureties that the Queen's peace should not be infringed either by him or his servants.[1] Charles Cavendish late in his life, in 1615, got into trouble with authority because he persistently refused to put any answer to a bill of complaint exhibited against him at the suit of Otho Nicholson, the receiver of money from assart lands, evidently in respect of certain lands in Sherwood Forest, which Sir Charles held and Nicholson claimed on behalf of the Crown. The Court of Exchequer on 20 May issued an order for the sequestration of the lands in dispute, and, as Cavendish still continued recalcitrant, on 9 October threatened that if there was any further delay, a writ of injunction would be issued, expelling the defendant and his servants from the lands in question. This step was effective, for six weeks later Cavendish had entered an answer to the bill against him. We do not learn what was the ultimate decision in the case.[2]

There is not a great deal more to say about Charles Cavendish. Arthur Collins, remarking upon the fact that he did not sit in any of James I's Parliaments, surmises that,

> 'being an indulgent Father, he was altogether intent on the Affairs of his Family, and the Education of his

[1] *C.S.P.D., 1598-1601*, p. 238; *Salisbury MSS.*, vol. ix, p. 229. Particulars in the 'Declaration of the Foul Outrage of John Stanhope against the Person of Sir Charles Cavendish, Knight', in Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

[2] *C.S.P.D., 1611-18*, pp. 286, 310, 314, 334. Nicholson had, on 16 October, 1612, been appointed receiver of moneys due from assarted lands. See *ibid.*, p. 153. Assarted lands were lands which had been cleared of forest and converted into arable.

Sons, making them masters of whatever their Genius led them to',

particularly those arts of fence and of horsemanship in which he was himself so proficient; and in the case of his eldest son he certainly did so with marked success. He married twice, his first wife being Margaret, the wife of Sir Thomas Kitson of Hengrave, Suffolk, who died, childless, a year after marriage. In 1591 he made a much greater match, with Katherine, the daughter and co-heiress of Cuthbert, Lord Ogle.[1] Her father having died in 1597, and her sister Jane (wife of Edward Talbot, and co-heiress) in 1626, Katherine, by then a widow, became Baroness Ogle in her own right; and this title, together with her Northumbrian estates, passed to her eldest son by Sir William, the future first Duke of Newcastle. Sir Charles's own properties included Welbeck Abbey and Bolsover Castle, both of which he acquired from Gilbert, Earl of Shrewsbury. We have already seen how and when he obtained possession of Welbeck. The manor and castle of Bolsover were granted to him on 20 December, 1608, for 1,000 years, at an annual rent of £10; but on 19 August, 1613, on payment of a certain unspecified sum, he became their absolute owner. 'Few landmarks of English history', it has been said, 'have so many associations and incidents illustrative of the fiercer passions of our fellow-creatures as Bolsover Castle.' Perched on its high limestone crags, in a superb position to dominate the great stretch of Derbyshire which is spread beneath it, the castle was probably built by the third William Peverel of the Peak in the twelfth century. It was generally held by royal governors until Henry VIII granted it in 1514 to Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk. On the attainder of the third Duke it re-

[1] See Collins, *op. cit.*, pp. 344-52; and H. A. Ogle, *Ogles of Bothal and Kirkley*, for the Ogles.

Monument of Sir Charles Cavendish and his second wife, Katherine, Baroness Ogle, in Bolsover Church

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verted to the Crown, and was granted to George, Lord Talbot in 1583, from whom it passed to the seventh Earl of Shrewsbury, who parted with it to Sir Charles Cavendish. The latter was thus established in both Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, and through his wife had influence also in Northumberland.[1] The castle was probably in a very ruinous condition when it passed into his hands. He at once started upon the task of rebuilding, employing as his architect that same John Smithson who was afterwards engaged by his son to continue the work at Bolsover and to design the riding house and other buildings at Welbeck. Bolsover thus became, as we see it to-day, a Stuart adaptation and elaboration of a Norman keep, 'the general character of the ancient structure having been preserved'.[2]

Charles Cavendish died in his sixty-fifth year on 4 April, 1617, at Welbeck, and he was buried in Bolsover Church. The inscription upon his monument, composed by Ben Jonson, runs as follows:

Charles Cavendish was a Man
whome
Knowledge, Zeale, Sincerity, made Religious,
Experience, Discretion, Courage, made Valiant,
Reading, Conference, Judgment, made Learned,
Religion, Valour, Learning, made Wise.
Birth, Merites, Favour, made Noble,
Respect, Meanes, Charitie, made Bountifull,
Equitie, Conscience, Office, made Just,

[1] R. W. Goulding, *Bolsover Castle* (6th ed., 1936), and *The Old Halls, Manors, and Families of Derbyshire*, by J. T. (3 vols., 1892), vol. iii, pp. 69-70.

[2] There appear to have been three members of the Smithson family, all architects or builders—Robert Smithson (1534-1614), the architect of Wollaton Hall, and perhaps also of Longleat, who is buried in Wollaton Church; John Smithson, who was employed both at Bolsover and at Welbeck; and Huntingdon Smithson, probably John's son, who assisted him. See Goulding, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

A Bolsover Building Account for 1613, the original of which is at Welbeck, has been transcribed, edited, and analysed by D. Knoop and G. P. Jones in *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*, vol. xlix, pt. i, p. 1936.

Nobilitie, Bountie, Justice, made Honourable,
Counsell, Ayde, Secrecie, made a Trusty Friend,
Love, Trust, Constancie, made a Kind Husband,
Affection, Advice, Care, made a Loving Father,
Friends, Wife, Sonnes, made Content,
Wisdom, Honour, Content, made Happy.

Ben Jonson also wrote a quaint epitaph upon Charles Cavendish, in which he is made to address his posterity in these words:

Sons, seek me not among these polished stones,
These only hide part of my flesh and bones,
Which, did they ne'er so neat or proudly dwell,
Will all turn dust, and may not make me swell.

Let such as justly have outlived all praise,
Trust in the tombs their careful friends do raise;
I made my life my monument and yours,
To which there's no material that endures,

Nor yet inscription like it. Write but that,
And teach your nephews it to emulate:
It will be matter loud enough to tell
Not when I died, but how I lived—farewell.[1]

[1] Brit. Mus., Harleian MS. 4955, f. 54; *The Works of Ben Jonson* (ed. W. Gifford, 3 vols., 1892), vol. iii, p. 459.

Chapter III

THE EARLY LIFE OF WILLIAM CAVENDISH, FIRST DUKE OF NEWCASTLE

The career of William Cavendish, first Duke of Newcastle —'the loyal Duke'—has been made familiar by Clarendon and other authorities on the Civil War, and, still more, by the life written of him by his second wife, Margaret Lucas, which is one of the classics of English biography. There is not a great deal that is new to be said about him, and yet no history of Welbeck could omit an account of the best-known, and the most remarkable, of all its owners, who in Van Dyck's fine portrait still seems to preside over the house which he made famous. Happily the story of the Duke's life is so full of varied interest that it bears frequent re-telling.

The date of his birth is uncertain, but he was baptized on 16 December, 1593. 'His education was according to his birth,' wrote the Duchess, 'for as he was born a gentleman, so he was bred like a gentleman.' He was given excellent instruction in horsemanship by his own father, 'a most ingenious and unparalleled master of that age', and by St. Antoine, who was Prince Henry's riding master. From early boyhood William Cavendish seems to have evinced that love of horses and skill in their management for which he was afterwards so celebrated. His father also initiated him in the use of weapons, and he became one of the greatest fencers of his time. Ben Jonson speaks of the 'mettled fire' of his rapier play. His father delighted in the

early promise shown by the boy in the 'heroic exercises', which were 'proper and fit for a person of quality'.[1] William also made some progress in accomplishments of a gentler nature, for when giving an account to his father in a letter written in French of his having met the future Charles I at Worksop, when he himself was twelve years old, he boasts of the surprise which had been aroused, particularly among the Scottish gentlemen present, by his proficiency in the French language.[2] On the other hand, when he went up to St. John's College, Cambridge, his tutors 'could not persuade him to read or study much, he taking more delight in sports, than in learning'.[3] It is clear, then, that in early life William Cavendish's interests were almost wholly athletic, and that he shewed nothing of those literary gifts and inclinations which distinguished him in manhood.[4] But the rather curious transaction of the purchase, together with a horse and some dogs, of a chorister, or 'singing-boy', for the sum of £50, may be taken as indicating that his love of music was developed as early as his love of animals.[5] In 1610, when he was only fifteen or sixteen, his father was able to secure for him a knighthood of the Bath, on the occasion of the creation of Prince Henry as Prince of Wales.[6] Two years

[1] *Life of William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle*, by Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle (ed. C. H. Firth, 1886), pp. 104-6.

[2] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 118. [3] *Life*, p. 104.

[4] Few of the manuscripts of Newcastle's poems are dated; none can with certainty be attributed to an earlier year than 1634, when he was writing verse—probably under the influence of Ben Jonson. 'A Proper new Ballad, to be sunge or whistled, to the tune of Bessey-Bell,' belongs to that year. One or two of the early poems are religious—e.g. 'A Meditation preparatory to the receiving of the B. Sacrament on Christmas day 1636.'

[5] *Life*, p. 105. See the remarks made by Émile Montégut in his study of the Duke in *Le Maréchal Davout; La Duchesse et le duc de Newcastle* (Paris, 1895).

[6] *Life*, p. 2.

William Cavendish, 1st Duke of Newcastle,
1593–1676

from a painting by Sir A. Van Dyck
The distinctive 'Cavendish' frame enclosing the picture is of interest. After the Restoration the 1st Duke of Newcastle reframed the family portraits in this style, with the Cavendish crest at the top.

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later he went abroad in the suite of Sir Henry Wotton, who was sent on a special embassy to the Duke of Savoy. We are told that the Duke took a fancy to young Cavendish and desired to retain him at his Court, throwing out as an inducement the prospect of military employment; but Wotton obviously could not leave his young charge behind him without his parents' consent.[1]

Soon after William's return to England, in May, 1616, died Gilbert, seventh Earl of Shrewsbury,[2] and less than a year later Sir Charles Cavendish also died. It was probably in 1618 that William married his first wife, Elizabeth, daughter of William Basset of Blore, widow of the third son of the Earl of Suffolk, by which marriage he acquired considerable estates in Staffordshire. Elizabeth bore to her husband ten children, five of whom died in infancy.[3] In the early days of their marriage husband and wife 'lived,

[1] *Life*, pp. 3-4.

[2] William acted as his executor. We find the widowed Countess referring bitterly to 'the slanderous tongues of those who say I shall now make debts great or small as I like'. *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 118.

[3] There were six sons and four daughters; two sons and three daughters survived infancy. The elder son, Charles, Viscount Mansfield, died in 1659; the second, Henry, succeeded to the dukedom of Newcastle. The eldest daughter, Lady Jane, married Charles Cheyne, afterwards Viscount Newhaven; the second, Lady Elizabeth, married Lord Brackley, afterwards Earl of Bridgewater; the third, Lady Frances, married Oliver, Earl of Bolingbroke. That Newcastle was an affectionate parent, seems to be shewn by the following verses found among the large collection of his MSS. at Welbeck:

Sweet Charles,
This letter, if you like it not, then rase it:
But answer it, for Usus promptus facit.
W. N.

'My Lord.
I can not tel what to wright
Charleles Mansfeild'

Sweet Jane, I know you are a rare inditer,
And hath the pen of a most ready writer.
W. N. [OVER

for the most part, in the country', pleasing themselves and their neighbours 'with hospitality, and such delights as the country afforded'. Only occasionally did Cavendish 'go up to London for some short time to wait on the King'.[1] The Cavendishes apparently were content at first with the quiet pleasures of their rural existence, enlivened occasionally by the excitement of such an event as Lady Rutland's coming on a visit to Welbeck in such a hurry in the middle of winter that her 'night stuffe' was forgotten, by which means she caught a burning and dangerous

'My Lord
I know you doo but Jest with mee
& so in obdence I right this nothing
Jane Cavendysshe'

Bess, you must write too; write but what you think.
Now you're a girl, dissemble when you link.
W. N.

Frank, prithee write to me thy running hand
That none can read, and all less understand.
W. N.

Sir, you must write too, my beloved Harry,
That asketh blessing and will never tarry.
W. N.

To be writ in my book, & before the mask book.

Sweet Daughter, know, I was not nice or coy,
But made a country mask, a Christmas toy,
At your desires; but I did not look
You would record my follies in a book.
You'll lose by that. . . . Therefore I'd rather,
For your sakes and my own, be held a father
Of gravity, formality, precise:
An outside out of fashion is held wise.
[Then about 80 lines on the real folly of so-called wise men]
. . . But prithee, stay,
Oh muse! This theme would last my life's doomsday.
But you will pardon this, ladies; have pity:
Forgive the gate, though much too big for the city.
'Your Louinge & Iñ this
Your obediente Father.
W: N:'

[1] *Life*, p. 3.

fever; and saddened by the death of their first-born son,[1] and, as we have seen, by several other such calamities.

But Cavendish was not disposed to remain for long in obscurity. In 1619 King James paid a visit to Welbeck, and shortly after this William was raised to the peerage with the title of Baron Cavendish of Bolsover and Viscount Mansfield, the patent being dated 3 November, 1620. His younger brother, Charles, had already received the honour of knighthood.[2] Cursed with physical deformity, a puny mis-shapen dwarf, the younger brother by his fine qualities, both of character and of intelligence, and by the singular sweetness of his disposition, won the affection and the admiration of all who came in contact with him. Both his sister-in-law, Margaret, and Clarendon sing his praises in terms of the highest eulogy, and in later life his magnanimity placed William under the greatest obligations to him. Soon new dignities came to the house of Cavendish. On the accession of Charles I, Mansfield was appointed Lord Warden of the Forest of Sherwood and Lord-lieutenant of Nottinghamshire. On the death of his cousin William, Earl of Devonshire, he became also Lord-lieutenant of Derbyshire. On 7 March, 1628, he was advanced to the earldom of Newcastle-upon-Tyne; and when his mother died, about a year later, he inherited from her the barony of Ogle. The latter title brought with it important estates in Northumberland, worth at that time £3,000 a year.[3] These honours were celebrated by Newcastle's protégé, Dr. Andrewes, in the following congratulatory verses:

> Welbecke, bid Welcome to thy noble Lorde,
> And entertain him well at Bed and borde.
> Whoe doth retourne with Honour and with mirth,
> Added to that, with which he did goe forth.

[1] H.M.C., *Rutland MSS.*, vol. i, p. 475.
[2] Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
[3] *Life*, pp. 3-6; Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

Nor bee offended, that thy ancient name,
Is not a tytle made of glorious fame,
As Bolser, Mansfield, and Newcastle ar.
Thy Fortune is than theirs, more happie far.
They give him names, by w^ch^ one may him call,
Thou hast his presence w^ch^ is worth them all.

In a further poem Andrewes recounted all his patron's achievements in this wise:

When you were in your infant age,
You then took Honour from your Parentage,
A Youth you travailed by Sea and Land
The Foraine Languages to understand,
Then did you practice foils, to tilt and dance,
For Horsemanship, you went beyond all France,
When you began to tread a young man's path,
You fetched then an Honour from the Bath,
You had the Honour next to have a Wife
Of a Good Fortune and a better Life.
You had the Honour then to be a Sire
Of as sweet Babes as any could desire.
When you the woman's field had bravely fought
To Mansfield then a Viscount you were brought,
When both the Towne and County did desire
To have you Lord Lieutenant of the Shire.
Last in Newcastle you triumphant sitt,
And place an Earles rich Coronett on itt.
What Honour yet remains, if that I Knewe
I would describe it nott in black, but blewe,
So might your Honours w^ch^ are scattered round
Bee as it were all in a Garter bound.[1]

Newcastle was now the possessor of great wealth, but he was lavish in the use of it; and in 1633, and again in the following year, he astonished contemporaries by his profuse expenditure. In 1633 Charles I made a journey to Scotland for his coronation there, and on his way he stayed at the manor of Worksop. Newcastle, who had been appointed, together with the officers of the Court, to attend

[1] Brit. Mus., Harleian MS. 4955, f. 82.

the King,[1] arranged for a great banquet and entertainment to be held at Welbeck; and a masque was written specially for the occasion by Ben Jonson with the title *The King's Entertainment at Welbeck*. The characters in the masque were Master Accident, school-master of Mansfield; Father Fitzale, a learned antiquary; and Stub of Stub-hall, a rustic bridegroom, who contended with six bold bachelors at the quintain in honour of his bride. The masque concluded with a sonorous address to the King:

> 'such a King
> As men would wish that knew not how to hope
> His like but seeing him'.[2]

Of this hospitality Clarendon writes, that the Earl entertained his Majesty

> 'in such a wonderful manner, and in such an excess of Feasting, as had scarce ever before been known in England; and would be still thought very prodigious, if the same Noble Person had not, within a year or two afterwards, made the King and Queen a more stupendious Entertainment which (God be thanked), though possibly it might too much whet the appetite of others to excess, no man ever after in those days imitated'.[3]

On this second occasion Newcastle placed Welbeck at the disposal of the King and Queen, and they stayed there for six days;[4] but the banquet took place at Bolsover, Ben Jonson once more providing a masque—*Love's Welcome*

[1] H.M.C., *Various Collections*, vol. vii, p. 401.

[2] *Ben Jonson* (ed. C. H. Herford and P. Simpson, 4 vols., Oxford, 1925-32), vol. ii, pp. 332-4. *The Works of Ben Jonson* (ed. W. Gifford), vol. iii, pp. 214-19.

[3] *Clarendon's History of the Rebellion* (3 vols. in 6, Oxford, 1712), vol. i, pp. 78-9. See also *Life*, pp. 103-4; Duchess of Newcastle, *CCXI Sociable Letters* (1664), pp. 340-3; J. Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, part II, vol. i (1680), p. 178.

[4] *C.S.P.D., 1634-5*, p. 149.

at Bolsover—quite unlike the previous performance, for after an opening song of welcome and a dance of masons, carpenters, plumbers, and other mechanics, it brought upon the stage Vulcan, Vitruvius, and three Cyclops.[1] The second entertainment was far more expensive than the first, and cost some £15,000, a set of table linen bought for the occasion alone costing £160. Newcastle was wealthy, but no one in the kingdom could afford expenditure on so extravagant a scale.[2] Subsequently he entertained the Elector Palatine and Prince Rupert at Welbeck, but at infinitely less cost. Newcastle throughout his life shewed a love of profusion, and even when he was reduced to penury in his exile, was quite unable to live economically. One may feel sure that it would never have occurred to him to entertain his sovereign without inordinate outlay; but it is not unkind to suggest that he had an ulterior motive. For we find him writing to Thomas Wentworth, afterwards Earl of Strafford, on 5 August, 1633, and confessing his eager desire to obtain employment at Court. He had, he said, waited most diligently upon the King during the Scottish journey; he confessed that it had been no small charge to him, and that he had hurt his estate as the result of it. He had long been hoping, and nothing had come of his hopes. He was resolved to labour no more, but to wait quietly at Welbeck; he 'would be loth to be sick in Mind, Body, and Purse'. He tried to console himself with the reflection that if he were to get what he desired, he might find it a painful life, and that, burdened by debt as he already was, the fruition of his hopes might undo him entirely.

'Children come on apace, my Lord, and with this weight of debt that lies upon me, I know no diet better

[1] *Works of Ben Jonson* (ed. Gifford), vol. iii, pp. 220-3.

[2] See Rushworth, *op. cit.*, part II, vol. i, p. 283.

than a strict diet in the country, which, in time, may recover me of the prodigal disease.'

But the Earl could find no ray of light anywhere, for in the very next sentence he declared that he had been trying to carry out this plan during the summer at Welbeck, and he was worse in debt than ever. Ruefully he protested that he could see no reason why the King ever should give him anything; and he concluded this lugubrious epistle with the reflection that Wentworth and his friends had spoken so often to his Majesty on his behalf, and that he himself had so often refreshed their memories in this particular, that he was resolved to importune them no longer.[1]

Ostensibly the letter expresses resignation, but there is bitter discontent in every line of it; and Newcastle did not carry out his vaunted resolve to abandon all thoughts of Court favour. On the contrary, when the King and Queen visited Welbeck in the following year, the same thoughts were again uppermost in his mind, and he was receiving advice from Wentworth that he should, while in attendance on his Majesty, two or three days after his leaving Welbeck, gently renew his application, putting it that he was resolved to accept employment 'only as a personal obligation from himself alone'; that his desire for it arose solely from 'singleness of affection', and that he would value it simply because it was the highest honour he could have in this world to be always near the King, not as a means for the betterment of his future, but merely as a mark of royal respect and esteem.[2]

We do not know whether Newcastle followed Wentworth's advice: at all events the desired appointment was not obtained, and the retirement at Welbeck continued, and had to be acquiesced in, with such degree of philo-

[1] *Strafford's Letters and Despatches* (2 vols., 1739), vol. i, p. 101.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 274-5, July 19, 1634.

sophy as the Earl had at his command. There was indeed plenty to occupy his time and his attention—the management of his estates, and the maintenance of his great houses. Dr. Francis Andrewes addressed some verses to the Earl in 1630 on the glories of Bolsover perched on its abrupt limestone eminence, and produced another poem in which he compared the amenities of Hardwick Hall, Worksop Manor, Welbeck Abbey, and Bolsover Castle.

> *Hardwicke* for hugeness, *Worsope* for Light,
> *Welbecke* for use, and *Bolser* for sight,
> *Worsope* for walks, *Hardwick* for Hall,
> *Welbecke* for brew-house, *Bolser* for all.
>
> . . . . .
>
> *Hardwicke* is rich, *Welbecke* is fine,
> *Worsope* is statelie, *Bolser* divine.[1]

The suggestion of the jingling rhyme is that of all the great houses of the neighbourhood Welbeck was the most useful, and Bolsover the most magnificent. Newcastle possessed them both. He appears to have carried out his duties as Lord-lieutenant in both the counties of Notts and Derby conscientiously, in particular that of mustering the trained bands, and seeing that they were properly furnished with arms, except when, as in October, 1631, plague was too rampant to allow of the musters being held at all;[2] and there were the recurrent anxieties of his wife's confinements,[3] and concern regarding the children's health afterwards. Finally, Newcastle was now beginning to evince a dilettante interest in art and literature, and a certain curiosity regarding scientific and philosophic prob-

[1] Brit. Mus., Harleian MS. 4955, ff. 67, 82, quoted Rawson, *op. cit.*, pp. 351-2, and in R. W. Goulding's *Bolsover Castle*.

[2] *C.S.P.D., 1631-3*, p. 163.

[3] A certain Richard Andrews prescribed for the Countess when she was pregnant in May 1633 a powder of cassia and saffron and borale to hasten the birth and make it easy. He had other interesting suggestions. See *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 123.

lems, of which he had given no hint in boyhood. Together with his chaplain, Dr. Payn, 'who had a very witty searching brain of his own', he carried out chemical investigations at Bolsover. Locking themselves into a chamber there, they examined the properties of a compound of brimstone and saltpetre, and as the result of their experiments, the Earl decided that the sun is 'nothing else but a very solid body of salt and sulphur, inflamed by its own motion upon its own axis'.[1] More profitable than his own researches was his very interesting correspondence with Thomas Hobbes, who owed his first step in life to the first Earl of Devonshire, who, on the advice of the head of Magdalen Hall, Oxford, employed him as tutor to his son. The young Oxford graduate travelled with his pupil on the Continent, and then settled down with infinite comfort for a number of years at Chatsworth, until the premature death of the second Earl. It was during this time that Newcastle made Hobbes's acquaintance, and we know that the philosopher visited Welbeck in 1630, since in the dedication of his work entitled *A Minute or first Draught of the Optics*, which he published in Paris in 1646, he speaks of the monograph as being

> 'grounded especially upon that which about 16 years since I affirmed to your Lordship at Welbeck, that light is a fancy in the mind, caused by motion in the brain'.[2]

Problems of optics and of colour seem to have been of particular interest to Newcastle, for they figure from time to time in Hobbes's letters to his friend. The question of the merits of a burning or multiplying glass invented by a

[1] See the Duchess of Newcastle's *Philosophical and Physical Opinions* (1663), p. 463.

[2] See T. Hobbes' *English Works* (11 vols., 1839-45), vol. vii, pp. 467-71.

certain Dr. Warner receives close attention.[1] On the Earl's behalf Hobbes searches London for a copy of Galileo's *Dialogues*, and, though very few copies are available, succeeds in procuring what he regards as a good bargain.[2] When Hobbes is in Paris, Newcastle sends him a present, which Hobbes describes as being 'proportioned to your goodness, not to my service'.[3] Later on, the greatest of English horsemen induced the greatest of English philosophers to apply his scientific method to problems of equitation—with the strangest results.[4] In 1636 Newcastle tried to induce Hobbes to leave Chatsworth and to settle permanently at Welbeck, and the latter seems to have been tempted to accept the invitation. He did not do so, but expressed his wish to come 'as soon as I can, and stay as long as I can without inconvenience to your Lordship'.[5] But bad weather and bad roads intervened, and apparently he was not able even to visit Welbeck in 1636. The Civil War interrupted their intercourse, but Newcastle and Hobbes met again in Paris during the days of exile.

Another of Newcastle's friends was Van Dyck, whose portraits at Welbeck are a memorial of friendship as well as of patronage. In February, 1637, the Earl, in acknowledging the receipt of paintings made for him by the artist, declares with doubtful felicity that the more he looks at them the more he thinks them nature and not art.

> 'If it be a disease, it is epidemical, for such power hath your hand on the eyes of mankind. Next the blessing of your company and sweetness of conversation, the greatest

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, pp. 126, 129-30.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 124. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 125.

[4] S. A. Strong, *Catalogue of Letters and other Historical Documents exhibited in the Library at Welbeck* (1903), app. pp. 237-40: 'Considerations touching the Facility or Difficulty of the Motions of a Horse on Straight Lines, or Circular.'

[5] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, pp. 129-31.

blessing were to be an Argus or all over but one eye, so it or they were ever fixed upon that which we must call yours. What wants in judgment I can supply with admiration, and scape the title of ignorante since I have the luck to be astonished in the right place, and the happiness of being passionately your humble servant.'[1]

One of Newcastle's principal occupations during this period of his life was the extension of the buildings at Bolsover and at Welbeck. He left the imprint of his romantic temper upon Bolsover—in the somewhat ornate internal decorations and furnishings of the Keep which his father had erected, with its elaborate marble fireplaces and its mural paintings and frescoed ceilings; in the great range of additional buildings which he constructed along the face of the steep escarpment, including a long gallery 220 feet in length, dining-rooms, withdrawing-room, and many other rooms, apparently intended to form a suite of State apartments; in the riding house 90 feet long by 30 broad, and in the elaborate fountain, with its busts of Roman emperors, its griffins and satyrs and its marble statue of Venus ascending from her bath.[2]

Newcastle also added considerably to the house at Welbeck. We have no documentary evidence as to the use which the earliest occupants after the Dissolution made of the original monastic buildings, or in what condition Sir Charles Cavendish found them. But it seems highly probable that Sir Charles made use of the southern range of those buildings for offices, and erected a new house above the existing undercroft of the western range and extending beyond this portion of the abbey. A note by George Vertue records that in the second Earl of Oxford's time the name

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 131.

[2] See the detailed description of these buildings in Goulding, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-38.

of John Smithson and the date 1604 were inscribed on an arcade at each end of a garden canal.[1] Evidently Smithson was employed at Welbeck as well as at Bolsover, and it is probable that his work was carried on uninterruptedly at both places when William Cavendish succeeded to the properties. Newcastle's extensions at Welbeck consisted of an additional south wing, adding to the accommodation of the house itself, erected between 1620 and 1625; a riding house, which was completed in 1623;[2] a long range of stables completed in 1625, including a great stable, and with a gate-house and porter's lodge adjoining, which was at right-angles to the riding house and faced the dwelling-house, a great court being formed in the space between. The riding house still remains, forming the present library and chapel of Welbeck; but the range of stables was entirely demolished by the Countess of Oxford in 1752 and 1753; while the southern wing has been so much altered and enlarged since Newcastle's time that no trace of Smithson's work remains.[3]

In pursuits bucolic, scientific, and artistic, Newcastle occupied himself during these years of retirement at Welbeck; but neither discussions on optics with the learned Mr. Hobbes nor the enthusiastic enjoyment of Van Dyck portraits, nor even the excitement of experiments with Dr.

[1] *Vertue Note Books*, vol. ii (Walpole Society, vol. xx, 1932), p. 32.

[2] An inscription over the doorway at the east end of the building states that William, Viscount Mansfield, built it, John Smithson having charge of the work, in 1623.

[3] Of the house as it was in the seventeenth century the east front was reconstructed in 1746-50, and again in 1901-3; while of the rooms in the west front the Great Hall was rebuilt in 1749-50: but in the basement of the present house there still exist seven bays of a thirteenth-century undercroft, while on the first floor the 'Horsemanship dressing room' contains panelled walls and stone vaulting alike decorated with the Cavendish crest and the arms, crest, and badge of the Ogle family. I am much indebted to Mr. Francis Needham for help in reconstructing the building activities of the two Cavendishes at Welbeck.

The Duke of Newcastle's Riding House, built by John Smithson, 1623
from a photograph taken c. 1895

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Payn in the locked laboratory at Bolsover, afforded solace for disappointed ambitions. In the spring of 1636 he was making great efforts to secure the position of governor to the Prince of Wales, the future Charles II, but at first it seemed with no better prospect of success than in similar attempts before. He wrote on 8 April from London to his wife:

> 'There is nothing I either say or do or hear but it is a crime, and I find a great deal of venom against me.'

The King and Queen both used him 'very graciously', but no one else did; he was cried down more than he had ever been cried up, and he was looked upon as a lost man.[1] Hobbes, in a letter from Paris, mainly concerned with questions of natural philosophy, expressed his sorrow that his Lordship found not so good dealing in the world as he deserved.[2] But Newcastle did not entirely abandon hope; he calculated the chances of his chief rivals for the coveted post—the Earl of Leicester and Lord Danby, and when they each received other appointments, really could not believe that the pretensions of Lord Goring need be taken seriously.[3]

Eventually, after he had passed through great perturbation of spirit, Newcastle received from Mr. Secretary Windebank the formal notification that

> 'his Majesty having a purpose, according to the precedents of former times, to settle the government of the person and family of the Prince answerable to his state of years, and having deliberately advised upon some person of honour and trust, to be near his Highness, to be a chief director in so weighty a business, hath been pleased, in his gracious opinion of your Lordship, to make choice of you to be the only gentleman of his Bedchamber at this time, and hath commanded me to give you knowledge of this princely resolution'.

[1] *Portland MSS.*, p. 127. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 128-9.
[3] *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 127.

The Secretary added an assurance such as Newcastle plainly had been curiously anxious to receive, however little reality there may have been in it, that he did not owe his success to the influence of friends, 'but merely and entirely to the King's and Queen's Majesties alone'.[1] Wentworth, who had been zealous on the Earl's behalf for so long, wrote to him to the same effect. The King, he said, had been particularly anxious to make it clear that the appointment was made immediately by himself, and jealous lest his lordship 'should have the least apprehension any other creature' had any share in the transaction.[2] The formal commission to Newcastle to take Prince Charles into his charge was issued on 15 May, 1638.[3]

Thus Newcastle assumed the responsibility of bringing up the heir to the throne, who was at this time eight years old. Some of his duties appear to have been those of a nurse. Queen Henrietta Maria writes to her son:

> 'Charles I am sore that I must begin my first Letter with chiding you because I heere you will not take physike. I hope it was onlei for this day and that to morrowe you will doe it, for yf you will not I must come to you, and make you take it, for it is for your healthe. I have given order to my lord Newcastell to send mi worde to night whether you will or not, therefore I hope you will not give mi the paines to goe and so I rest your affectionate mother,
>
> Henriette Marie, R.'[4]

[1] *State Papers collected by Edward, Earl of Clarendon* (3 vols., Oxford, 1767-86), vol. i, pp. 8-9. See also Newcastle's letter of acknowledgment to Windebank, p. 8.

[2] Strafford's *Letters*, vol. ii, p. 174.

[3] *C.S.P.D., 1637-8*, p. 434.

[4] Brit. Mus., Harleian MS. 6988, f. 95, printed in Ellis, *Original Letters*, series I, vol. iii, p. 286.

WELBECK.
L'Ecurie voutée de pierre, les pilliers de pierre, la mangeoire de pierre, l'Avoine, & une fontaine qui coule le long de la mangeoire, se rend dans une auge qui dessous en coule un petit ruisseau. Contre la teste de chaque Cheval il y a une petite chronnière pour l'Avoine du Cheval, laquelle couure est fermé, selon la chaleur, ou froideur, elle est bouchée de pierre de taille
Le Grenier de l'Ecurie.
Noblissimo Comiti ac Magnatum

Stables and Gate-house built by John Smithson, 1625,
and demolished in 1752
Méthode . . . nouvelle de Dresser les Chevaux, Antwerp, 1657

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Even in his childhood the Prince had a lively sense of humour, for when his preceptor himself happened to be unwell, his Royal Highness wrote solicitously:

> 'My Lord, I would not have you take too much Phisick; for it doth alwaies make my worse, and I think it will do the like with you.'[1]

Besides generally superintending the welfare of the Prince of Wales, Newcastle took a personal part in his instruction. The most skilled and enthusiastic of horsemen gave the Prince riding lessons, and apparently with the most admirable results: for in his work, *La Méthode et Invention Nouvelle de Dresser les Chevaux*, published in 1658 and dedicated to Charles, he describes him as 'not only the handsomest and most comely horseman in the world, but as knowing and understanding in the art as any man'.[2] The guardian also essayed to give his pupil lessons in statecraft, and he composed a *Letter of Instructions to Prince Charles for his Studies, Conduct, and Behaviour*, which is a very interesting document if only on account of the light which it throws upon its author's political opinions. It is not surprising to find that one who had made scant use of the academic opportunities of his university life considered book learning to be of little use for the heir to the throne. The greatest clerks, he said, were not the most learned men, and the greatest captains—'the greatest troublers of the world'—were not its greatest scholars. Great bookworms did not make great statesmen. He admitted that there had been in the past, and were now, a few instances of statecraft and learning being combined; but 'they study men more now than books, or else they would prove but silly statesmen'. The acquisition of languages might be useful; but, he adds, 'I confess I would

[1] Harleian MS. 6988, f. 101; Ellis, *op. cit.*, p. 287.

[2] Cf. *Life*, p. 62.

rather have you study things than words, matter than languages'. Besides, studiousness was a positive disadvantage, for contemplation spoilt action, 'and virtue consists in that'. If any books were to be read they should be histories, because they afforded lessons both from the excellences and the errors of rulers and subjects; there were the same 'humours' now as in the past—only the names were different. Just as he did not wish to see his future sovereign too much given to study, so Newcastle objected to his being too religious. 'One may be a good man but a bad king'; history proved that a ruler might gain the kingdom of heaven, but lose his own kingdom. Whatever the author's own scale of values, whatever he may conceive to be the proper scale of values for the private individual, he is quite certain that the ruler must place the earthly before the heavenly. At the same time the prince ought not to be neglectful of his devotions; it was indeed essential that he should be punctilious—for reasons not of piety but of polity!

> 'Were there no Heaven or Hell you shall see the disadvantage, for your government; if you have no reverence at prayers, what will the people have, think you? They go according to the example of the Princes; if they have none, then they have no obedience to God; then they will easily have none for your Highness; no obedience, no subjects.'

On the other hand, added Newcastle, with an oblique reference to the English Puritans, for whom he at all times felt the utmost disapproval, if the people go

> 'Bible mad, over much burned with fiery zeal, they may think it a service to God to destroy you and say the Spirit moved them and bring some example of a King with a hard name in the Old Testament. Thus one way you may have a civil war, the other a private treason.'

The remainder of the advice which Newcastle tendered to the Prince in this remarkable document was such as would meet with universal approval; for he dwelt mainly upon the need of shewing constancy and civility to everyone. On the one hand, the ruler should not be so familiar as to bring himself into contempt; on the other, he should not be 'so seared with majesty as to imagine himself not of mankind'. There were things in life which a king must do in common with the very meanest or not live at all, and he would be a better king for recollecting that he was 'of the lump of man'. While he should be no anchorite, no Diogenes in his tub, a philosophic outlook would enable him to be a brave, noble, and just king.[1]

The most notable feature of this *Letter of Instructions* is obviously its machiavellianism. Newcastle uses the word virtue in the same sense in which it is used in *Il Principe*, and preaches *realpolitik*. A ruler must be no slave to phrases or to abstract principles; he must be guided by maxims of expediency. But the attitude is not wholly cynical. Newcastle wished his prince to ponder the thought of morality as well as that of profit, to be just as well as successful. The other obviously striking feature of the document is its suggestion of what may happen if a people becomes 'Bible-mad'. In after days Newcastle may well have prided himself upon his prescience, and felt that the Civil War afforded abundant evidence of the wisdom and essential rightness of his principles. His views throughout his career remained fundamentally the same, only deepened and strengthened by unhappy experience of the evils entailed by what he regarded as deplorable fanaticism both upon the monarch and upon his loyal servant.

When Newcastle was made a Duke in the reign of the

[1] The original of the letter is in Brit. Mus., Harleian MS. 6988, ff. 111-14. It is printed in Ellis, *Original Letters*, ser. I, vol. iii, pp. 288-91, and in the appendix to *Life*, pp. 184-7.

sovereign whose youthful steps he had endeavoured to guide, a reference was made in the patent to his services as a guardian. This appreciative passage runs:

> 'The great proofs of his wisdom and piety, are sufficiently known to us from our younger years, and we shall always retain a sense of those good principles he instilled into us; the care of our youth, which he happily undertook for our good, he as faithfully and well discharged.'[1]

Some may feel that the career of Charles II does not afford a very satisfactory example of 'good principles', and doubt whether the principles which the guardian inculcated really were good ones.

Newcastle did not retain his position as guardian of the Prince of Wales for any length of time, the even tenor of his life at Court being rudely broken by the emergence of those troubles which eventually brought the country to the catastrophe of the Civil War, and involved the Earl in duties of a much more arduous and exacting nature than any which he had hitherto undertaken. There is a hint of the coming crisis as early as June, 1638, when he reports to the Council, in his capacity as Lord-lieutenant, regarding complaints made by divers townships in Derbyshire of unequal ship-money assessments.[2] But the event which first involved him in serious national happenings was the outbreak of the Scottish rebellion in 1639, which was the consequence of the attempt to impose Laud's ecclesiastical system on Scotland. The long abeyance of Parliament rendered it difficult to make the necessary preparations for the conflict. Wentworth, therefore, advised that a Parliament should now be summoned; but at the same time, in order to give a lead to the country, he himself and other courtiers

[1] See Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 43; *Life*, pp. 96-9.
[2] *C.S.P.D., 1637-8*, p. 494; 7 June, 1638.

Charles, Prince of Wales
from a painting by Sir A. Van Dyck

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advanced large sums of money for the prosecution of the war. Wentworth lent £20,000; Newcastle £10,000. The latter also raised a volunteer troop of 120 knights and gentlemen of quality,

> 'who were either allied to the Earl or of immediate dependence upon him, and came together purely on his account; and he called this troop the Prince of Wales's troop, whereof the Earl himself was Captain'.

As all the members of the troop were men of substance, its maintenance cost the King nothing.[1] When this force reached Berwick, the King specially honoured it by regarding it as under his own command alone, and not subject to the orders of any general whatsoever. This special distinction no doubt greatly flattered the captain of the troop; it certainly annoyed the general commanding the cavalry, the Earl of Holland, who was jealous of Newcastle in any case and personally disliked him. When the troop joined the rest of the Horse at the appointed rendezvous, for the advance into Scotland, Newcastle sent to Holland to enquire where his men should place themselves in the line of march. They were allotted a place in the rear. Newcastle then

> 'desir'd that the troop, since it belonged to the Prince of Wales might have some Precedence; which the General of the Horse refus'd to grant him, but requir'd him to march in the rank he had prescrib'd; and the other obey'd it accordingly, but with resentment, imputing it to the little kindness there was between them'.

[1] Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, part II, vol. ii, p. 929. Rushworth says the gentlemen of the troop were men of very good estates ranging from £500 to £2,000 *per annum* in value, 'all gallantly mounted and armed, and well attended with their own Servants well mounted; in the maintaining of which Troop the King was put to no Charge at all.'

Newcastle then ordered his cornet to take down the Prince of Wales's colours, and the troop marched without them rather than that they should be exposed to what he regarded as a grave indignity.[1] He felt himself deeply aggrieved, by reason both of the special quality of his men, and still more of the colours which they bore. Holland subsequently complained to the King of Newcastle's conduct; but Charles approved it. After the disbandment of the army on the termination of hostilities, Newcastle sent a challenge to the general, and a duel was arranged. But although Holland certainly did not lack courage he failed to appear on the field of honour. The King had been informed of the affair by some discreet third person, 'and so by the King's authority, the matter was composed'.[2]

After the Scottish War, Newcastle returned to his duties as guardian to the Prince of Wales; but in May, 1641, after he had held the post for three years, he suddenly resigned it. His biographer's version of this incident is that upon the assembling of the Long Parliament—'that rebellious and unhappy Parliament' as she describes it—Newcastle was privately informed that the House of Commons intended to deprive him of the office, and, preferring to forestall them, he prevailed upon the King to allow him to retire into the country.[3] Clarendon ascribes the surrender of office to Newcastle's realization of the hostility of the Earls of Holland and Essex, and to their resentment at finding that the principles with which he was instilling the Prince were not agreeable to their designs.[4] Newcastle may have been a special object of suspicion at this time as a friend of Strafford, now in the Tower after the passing of the Bill of Attainder against him. But there would appear to have

[1] Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, vol. i, p. 125. See also *Life*, pp. 6-7; H.M.C., *Rutland MSS.*, vol. i, p. 512; *C.S.P.D., 1639*, p. 283.

[2] Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, vol. i, p. 125.

[3] *Life*, p. 8. [4] Clarendon, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 425.

been a much more important reason for Newcastle's being ousted from his charge, for he was implicated in the Army Plot, which Pym revealed to the House of Commons on 5 May, though he himself was not an instigator of the plan. The formulators of the pleasant design to assist the sovereign by bringing up the army to London, in order to overawe the obnoxious Parliament, were Henry Jermyn and that delightful minor poet and personal friend of Newcastle—Sir John Suckling. The commander of the Army, the Earl of Northumberland, was ill and in any case did not seem to the conspirators fitted for the scheme they contemplated. They therefore decided that Newcastle should at least hold the nominal command, with the noisy, blustering, and rather irresponsible Lord Goring as his assistant. It was thought that in certain circumstances it might be desirable for the army to assemble in Nottinghamshire, there to be met by Newcastle and the Prince of Wales.[1] It was no doubt the discovery of this plot that induced the Earl to make his hurried retirement, rather than risk the displeasure of a Parliament which had not hesitated to strike at the King's principal adviser. Indeed the chief consequence of the disclosure of the Army Plot was the hastening of Strafford's execution. Another of its consequences was that the tranquillity of Welbeck, against which he had chafed so fretfully before his appointment at Court, once more seemed highly attractive to the Earl of Newcastle. He 'settled himself, with his lady, children, and family, to his great satisfaction, and rested under his own vine, and managed his own estate'.[2] But the tranquillity which he now valued and enjoyed was soon to pass beyond his reach.

[1] See *Portland MSS.*, vol. i, p. 20; S. R. Gardiner, *History of England, 1603-42* (10 vols., 1883-4), vol. ix, p. 313.

[2] *Life*, p. 8 *n.*

Chapter IV

THE FIRST DUKE OF NEWCASTLE AND THE CIVIL WAR, JANUARY 1642 TO AUGUST 1643

Shortly before the critical year 1642 opened, the Earl of Newcastle had celebrated his forty-eighth birthday, and so far, although his career had not been without interest, he had achieved nothing to give him a permanent niche in English history. But his opportunities for great distinction were now to come thickly upon him, and all he accomplished that is memorable both in action and in literature belongs to the next twenty or thirty years of his life. On 4 January Charles I made his calamitous attempt to arrest the five members—Pym, Hampden, Strode, Arthur Hazelrigg, and Denzil Holles. While he failed in his object, he had the five publicly proclaimed traitors. This merely increased their popularity with the London citizens, and on 10 January Charles, in order to save himself further humiliation, left his own capital. On 23 February Henrietta Maria sailed for Holland, taking with her her daughter Mary, who had recently married William II of Orange. Her intention was to raise forces abroad on her husband's behalf. The determination to suppress the great Irish rebellion which had broken out in the previous autumn, because it acutely raised the issue of the control of the army, brought to a head the struggle for ultimate supremacy between Crown and Parliament. To a Militia

Bill, which transferred the appointment of lords-lieutenant and governors of fortresses to Parliament, the King absolutely refused to agree; whereupon Parliament decided to enforce it without the royal assent. This revolutionary measure precipitated the Civil War. Among those nominated in the Militia Bill was Sir John Hotham, appointed to be governor of Hull. Hull was one of the most important fortresses in the kingdom, both as the leading port on the east coast after London, and because arms and accoutrements for 16,000 men had remained there ever since the disbandment of the army which had failed to enforce episcopacy upon Scotland. Charles was determined to secure Hull, and the fittest man to act as his agent for this purpose appeared to him to be the Earl of Newcastle, by reason of his great influence in the north of England.

On receipt of the King's instructions, issued on 11 January,[1] the Earl left Welbeck secretly at midnight 'when his family were all at rest, save two or three servants which he appointed to attend him',[2] and made his way to Hull. According to Rushworth, he

> 'desired to pass unknown calling himself Sir John Savage, and at his first coming was brought before the mayor under that name, till being known by some bystanders, he was forced to own both his name and his errand'.[3]

But nothing could be done by secret means. The King by his action was courting a trial of strength with Parliament, which, advertised of Charles's design, had despatched Captain Hotham with instructions to his father, Sir John, to make sure of Hull. On the morrow of his arrival New-

[1] *Lords' Journals*, vol. iv, p. 585.

[2] *Life*, p. 8.

[3] Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, part III, vol. i (1692), page 564.

castle, realizing that there was no disposition on the part of the town to accept him, wrote to the King:

> 'May it please your Most Sacred Majesty—I am here in Hull according to your Majesty's commands, but the town will not admit of me by any means, so I am very flat and out of countenance here, but will stay until I know your Majesty's further pleasure, which I hope I shall soon do. God preserve your Majesty,—Your Majesty's most faithful creature W. Newcastle.'[1]

But if Hull was not prepared to yield itself up to Newcastle, neither was its mayor disposed at once to accept Hotham, and, had the King acted with determination and promptitude, he might even yet have achieved a signal success over the Parliament. Instead of that he allowed his enemies to seize the initiative. Newcastle had not been three days in Hull when he received an order from the House of Peers to attend the service of the House. He did not at once obey this summons to Westminster, but sent to the King to know his pleasure. Charles told him to leave.[2] The very day of his departure Hotham entered Hull, and the magazine was at once surrendered into his hands. The House of Lords appointed a committee to examine into Newcastle's recent proceedings, but, upon his shewing the King's commission for his action, he was cleared of all personal responsibility; and, receiving the royal permission to retire into seclusion once again, he returned to Welbeck with much alacrity.[3]

On 23 April the King made an unsuccessful attempt in person to enter Hull and take possession of its military stores. On 26 May Parliament addressed to him a

[1] *C.S.P.D., 1642*, p. 256: 15 January, 1642.

[2] Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, vol. i, pp. 388-9; *Life*, p. 9.

[3] *Lords' Journals*, vol. iv, pp. 580, 585; *Life*, p. 10.

declaration or remonstrance, in answer to a royal message on the subject of the recalcitrance of Hull, wherein, incidentally, reference was made to Newcastle. It was asserted that in the matter of the Army Plot, while there had been insufficient evidence to justify judicial proceedings, yet there had been ground for suspicion, and that the Earl had not been left so unblemished in reputation that he should have been thought the fittest man in England for employment at Hull.[1] In answer to this declaration the King very properly protested indignantly against the imputation brought against Newcastle. 'If every vile aspersion' were allowed 'to bring virtuous and deserving men into obloquy', no man in England would be safe.[2] By this time civil war was quite inevitable, and the King, being at York, summoned Newcastle to attend him there. A day or two after his arrival the Earl received a commission to act as governor of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and to take over the command in the four northern counties—Northumberland, Durham, Cumberland, and Westmorland.[3] The King himself could provide him with nothing; there were no troops, military stores, or provisions of any kind. The Earl had no resources save his own personal and family interest; but out of that he created an army for the royal service. Beginning in a very small way, he first of all raised a troop of the same size as that which he had formed in 1640. From that small nucleus he created an army of 8,000, and altogether, from first to last, he was responsible, according to his biographer's computation, for collecting as many as 100,000 men for the Cavalier cause. His subsequent conduct of operations has often been criticized, but the debt which the King and his party owed him for his initial pro-

[1] Cobbett's *Parliamentary History* (36 vols., 1806-20), vol. ii, pp. 1307-8.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 1341.

[3] *Life*, p. 11.

ceedings can hardly be exaggerated. Clarendon rightly speaks of the 'speed and dexterity' with which he made himself master of a town and harbour of such consequence as Newcastle;[1] and there can be no doubt that it was mainly to the Earl's energy, influence, and popularity that the royalists owed their strength in the north of England. Soon, as Mrs. Hutchinson admits, he was master of all the strong places as far as the very borders of Scotland. It was not only in the four counties entrusted to his care that Newcastle created solid support for the King. As Mrs. Hutchinson says, there were some counties so wholly Royalist 'that the godly, for those generally were the parliament's friends, were forced to forsake their habitations and seek other shelters: of this sort was Nottinghamshire'. There Newcastle was beloved. 'He had indeed, through his great estate, his liberal hospitality, and constant residence in his county,' so endeared himself 'that no man was a greater prince, in all that northern quarter'.[2]

The most signal illustration of personal and splendid devotion to Newcastle is provided by the special regiment of foot which he formed, who came to be known as the White Coats. They are best described in the words of the Duchess. The regiment, she tells us, consisted of

> '3,000 of such valiant, stout, and faithful men (whereof many were bred in the moorish grounds of the northern parts) that they were ready to die at my Lord's feet, and never gave over, whensoever they were engaged in action, until they had either conquered the enemy, or lost their lives. They were called White-coats, for this following reason: my Lord being resolved to give them new liveries, and there being not red cloth enough to be had, took up so much of white as would serve to clothe

[1] Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, vol. i, p. 681.

[2] *Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson*, by his wife Lucy (ed. C. H. Firth, 1906), pp. 91-2, 118.

Saddle, Stirrups, Bits and Holsters of the 1st Duke of Newcastle

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them, desiring withal, their patience till he had got it dyed; but they, impatient of stay, requested my Lord, that he would be pleased to let them have it un-dyed as it was, promising they themselves would dye it in the enemy's blood. Which request my Lord granted them, and from that time they were called White-coats.'[1]

Newcastle believed that something more than arms was necessary to maintain the country in obedience to the King. In accordance with the views which he had expressed in his *Letter* to the Prince of Wales, he held that 'schism and faction in religion is the mother of all or most rebellions, wars, and disturbances in a state or government'; and he therefore appointed Dr. Cosin, then Dean of Peterborough, later Bishop of Durham, to view all sermons before they were preached, to see that they contained nothing reflecting upon the King's person or government.[2] As we have already seen, Newcastle was almost entirely dependent upon his own resources for supporting the Royalist cause in the north; but the Queen sent him a small amount of money, and the King of Denmark a ship laden with arms and ammunition. It was shortly after the arrival of this small assistance that, 'perceiving the flames increase more and more in both the Houses of Parliament then sitting at Westminster, against his Majesty's person and government', Newcastle formed the resolution to create a whole army for the King, who thereupon constituted him general of all the forces raised or to be raised north of the Trent and in the eastern counties. In order to facilitate his task, the King gave him the right to confer knighthood (a privilege which he used very sparingly), and also, not only permitted, but commanded him, 'to make use of all my loving subjects' services, without examining their consciences (more than their loyalty to me) as

[1] *Life*, p. 84. [2] *Life*, pp. 11-12.

you shall finde most to conduce to the upholding of my just Regnall power'. Acting upon this authority, Newcastle as he was obviously intended to do, admitted Papists into the forces under his command—an action which led to severe criticism, despite the *Declaration* which he issued in justification of it.[1] Owing to the Earl's promptitude, the extent of his influence in Northumberland, and the small number of the supporters of Parliament in the four northern counties, the outlook for the King was entirely satisfactory north of the Tyne. It was far otherwise in Yorkshire, where the two Hothams seemed masters of the entire county, the Royalist adherents being forced to seek refuge in the city of York. Before the end of September Newcastle received an invitation to bring his army south to the relief of the Yorkshire Royalists. He acted with great deliberation, fortifying Newcastle, Hartlepool, and Tynemouth Castle before going to the succour of the Yorkshire loyalists. Leaving a number of small garrisons on his way to secure his communications with his base, he brought a force of some 3,000 foot and several hundred horse or dragoons across the Tees on 1 December. While he had to leave about half his army in garrison either in Tyneside or on his line of march, and complained of the paucity of arms and supplies which he found available in Yorkshire, Newcastle enjoyed superiority of numbers over his adversaries. On the other hand, he had no experience of warfare, and he was to be pitted against Ferdinando, Lord Fairfax, who had seen service with the Swedish army, which was the most efficient in Europe, and against his

[1] *Life*, pp. 12-13; *Life of Hutchinson*, p. 119; Brit. Mus., Harleian MS. 6988, f. 125; Ellis, *Original Letters*, series I, vol. iii, p. 291. *A Declaration made by the Earl of Newcastle for his resolution of marching into Yorkshire, as also a just Vindication of himself from that unjust aspersion laid upon him for entertaining some Popish Recusants in his Service*—in Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, part III, vol. ii, pp. 78-81.

able son, Sir Thomas. Newcastle obviously stood in need of professional assistance, and very soon after his arrival at York he was joined by a regular soldier, General King (afterwards Lord Eythin), who, to use Clarendon's description, 'notwithstanding the unavoidable prejudice, in that Conjuncture, of his being a Scotsman, order'd the Foot with great wisdom and dexterity'.[1] The command of the cavalry was entrusted to Lord Goring, by the Queen's influence, and he, whenever he was sober, proved an able officer. To the command of his artillery Newcastle, who had for years been his friend and patron, appointed the poet and dramatist, William Davenant, who seems to have had no military qualifications for the post whatsoever.

What qualifications did Newcastle himself possess for high military command? On this subject some very outspoken opinions were subsequently expressed by Clarendon and by Sir Philip Warwick. Of his complete loyalty to the cause which he served, and of his outstanding personal courage, there was no question. In every engagement in which he took part this magnificent rider and swordsman was prepared to expose himself with complete indifference to danger. But bravery is only one of many qualities required for military leadership. Did Newcastle possess the instincts and temperament of a general? Clarendon once described him bluntly as 'a very lamentable man, and as fit to be a general as a bishop'.[2] Both he and Warwick agree that the Earl was not fitted for command, and they assign much the same reasons for their view. Warwick describes him as 'a gentleman of grandeur, generosity, loyalty, and steady and forward courage', but adds, 'his edge had

[1] *History of the Rebellion*, vol. ii, p. 142. King, like Lord Fairfax, had had experience of fighting in the Swedish army. He was raised to the Scottish peerage in March, 1643.

[2] *Clarendon's State Papers*, vol. ii, p. 63.

too much of the razor in it: for he had a tincture of a Romantick spirit, and had the misfortune to have somewhat of the Poet in him'. It was for this reason that he must needs choose Sir William Davenant, an excellent poet and a very loyal gentleman, to be his Lieutenant-General of Ordnance. More serious is the objection that because he liked to be diverted with the society of such men, he could not concentrate on the grim business of war and 'lost many opportunities'.[1]

In like manner Clarendon speaks of Newcastle as 'a very fine gentleman, active and full of courage', and refers to his great accomplishments, his delight in riding, fencing, dancing, poetry, and music,

> 'in which he indulged the greatest part of his time; and nothing could have tempted him out of those paths of pleasure . . . but honour and ambition to serve the King, when he saw him in distress, and abandoned by those who were in the highest degree obliged to him, and by him'.

On the field of battle he shone, showing invincible fearlessness in danger, 'in which the exposing of himself notoriously did sometimes change the fortunes of the day when his troops began to give ground'. But once actual fighting was over, his inclination was to retire 'to his delightful company, music, and his softer pleasures, to all of which he was so indulgent, and to his ease, that he would not be interrupted upon what occasions soever'. He was known in such circumstances to refuse admission to the chief officers of his army, even to General King himself, for two days together. He liked the absolute authority of command, its pomp, dignity and outward state; 'but the sub-

[1] Sir Philip Warwick, *Memoirs of the Reign of Charles I* (1701), p. 236.

stantial part, and fatigue of a General, he did not in any degree understand . . . nor could submit to'.[1]

The indecisiveness of the Civil War in its early stages has been attributed in some measure to the fact that the commanders on either side had no desire to see it brought to a decisive outcome: they did not desire the aggrandisement either of Crown or of Parliament, and therefore deliberately played for a stalemate, which would result in a compromise. Such is not the explanation of Newcastle's inability to make the fullest use of his opportunities. His allegiance to the King was absolute, his detestation of the political and religious principles of the Roundheads unequivocal. As Clarendon says, he loved monarchy both in the interests of the Crown, and also as 'the foundation and support of his own greatness', and he believed wholeheartedly in the necessity of order and obedience in the Church.[2] If Newcastle ultimately failed to win the war in the north of England for the King, it was not because he lacked the desire to do so, but because he lacked the ability. The combined influence of loyalty and ambition gave the position of general to a man who had few natural gifts for high military command.

Newcastle's early proceedings in Yorkshire were encouraging. The first engagement he fought was at Piercebridge, where he came upon a small force under the younger Hotham, and easily defeated it. After this he relieved York, which had been in imminent danger of falling into the enemy's hands. There followed a first encounter with Lord Fairfax, whose forces lay at Tadcaster. The fight

[1] Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, vol. ii, p. 509. Cf. Montégut, *op. cit.*, p. 295. 'Il fit la guerre civile avec entrain, avec verve, avec *brio*, mais en même temps avec une intermittence dans l'action qui semble accuser son énergie et une indolence qu'on a pu croire quelquefois calculée. Jamais il ne sut concentrer ses forces pour un grand dessein et combiner un coup décisif.'

[2] Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, vol. ii, p. 508.

was indecisive, but Fairfax found it necessary to retreat to Selby. On the other hand, the disparity in numbers between the adversaries was heavily in the Royalists' favour. Thus Sir Thomas Fairfax had the satisfaction of feeling that 'by the mercy of God', a few were 'delivered from an army, who in their thoughts had swallowed us up'.[1] The failure to achieve a complete success on this occasion was due to no fault of Newcastle, but to failure on the part of his subordinate, Lord Newport, who was his infantry general prior to King's appearance on the scene. Newcastle's plan was to attack Tadcaster on both sides, but Newport, 'whether it was out of neglect or treachery', did not carry out his part of the concentric movement.[2]

In December Newcastle was established at Pontefract, while he maintained a garrison at Tadcaster. He also sent Sir John Henderson to strengthen the Royalists in Newark, a position of great strategic importance from the beginning to the very end of the Civil War, and he thereby controlled both Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire. These early successes stirred the King to premature elation. On 15 December he wrote to the Earl:

> 'The services I have receaved from you have beene so eminent, and is lykely to have so great an influence upon all my Affaires, that I need not tell you that I shall never forgett it, but alwais look upon it as a principall instrument in keeping the Crowne upon my head. The business of Yorkshire I account almost done.'[3]

In truth 'the business of Yorkshire' was very far from done; it was only just beginning. Had Newcastle been

[1] *Short Memorials of Sir Thomas Fairfax, written by Himself*, in F. Masères, *Select Tracts relating to the Civil Wars in England* (1815), pp. 417-18.

[2] *Life*, p. 16.

[3] Ellis, *Original Letters*, ser. I, vol. iii, p. 293; Brit. Mus., Harleian MS. 6988, f. 130.

possessed of more initiative and a clearer appreciation of the strategic situation, he might well have settled the campaign in the north of England early in 1643; as Lord Tweedsmuir has said, 'Had he been a man of another mould he would have had the issues of the War in his hands.'[1] But he allowed the Fairfaxes with their much inferior numbers to make progress, because they were more nimble-witted and aggressive than he. Sir William Savile, whom Newcastle detached to secure the clothing towns of the West Riding, was beaten at Bradford, and subsequently (on 23 January, 1643) attacked in Leeds by Sir Thomas Fairfax, who succeeded in capturing the town. This success of the Parliamentarians was very valuable in itself; but still more useful was the fact that fugitives, escaping from Leeds to Wakefield, spread such alarming reports of the situation that Newcastle at Pontefract became alarmed, and quite unnecessarily decided to withdraw to York on 27 January, thus (to use Sir Thomas Fairfax's words) 'leaving once more a free intercourse, which he had so long time cut off', between his father's forces and his own.[2]

Being once again established at York, Newcastle proceeded to engage in a battle, not of arms, but of words, with Lord Fairfax. In a manifesto issued at this time, in which they made proposals of peace, the Parliamentary leaders justified their having had recourse to arms on the ground of their fears for the religion and the liberty of the country, 'which fears', they added, 'are continued, and increased, by the raising, drawing together, and arming of great Numbers of Papists, under the Command of the

[1] John Buchan, *Oliver Cromwell* (1934), p. 160.

[2] Masères' *Tracts*, p. 409. Still hoping for splendid results in the North, the King wrote to Newcastle on 13 February: 'Newcastell never Woman with Chylde more longed for anything than we for newes from you.' Brit. Mus., Harleian MS. 6988, f. 133.

Earl of Newcastle'.[1] Suggestions that Newcastle's army consisted almost entirely of Roman Catholics, and that his design was to extirpate the Protestant religion, may have been ridiculous; but they were quite liable to gain credence, and were certainly dangerous to the Royalist cause, so that it was well worth while to try to refute them. Newcastle made an effective reply to these allegations in a declaration printed at York in February. His object in Yorkshire, he said, was solely to protect those who were exposed to the tyranny of the Parliament. He himself had not the remotest inclination to Popery, and if he had granted some commissions to Papists, this was because they were loyal to their sovereign, as many Protestants were not. Moreover, as the rebels professed themselves to be of the same religion as his Majesty, difference in religion was not the cause of the struggle. The declaration concluded with a suggestion conceived in the spirit of medieval knight-errantry. Newcastle proposed that he and Fairfax should settle their differences in single combat. 'This is more conformable to the examples of our heroick ancestors, who used not to spend their time in scratching one another out of holes, but in pitched fields determined their doubts.' This method would bring an early termination to the sufferings of the people; 'let the God of Battles determine the right of our English law and liberties'.[2]

In answer to this strange manifesto Fairfax disclaimed the methods of warfare according to Amadis de Gaul, which seemed to appeal to his antagonist. He feared that the distractions of the country could not be settled in a single day; but whenever opportunity should arrive of giving battle to his Lordship he would avail himself of that honour, and he hoped that all who had observed the reso-

[1] Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, vol. ii, p. 119.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 175; Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, part III, vol. ii, pp. 133-8.

lution of his army at Tadcaster and Leeds would readily believe him.[1]

On 22 February Queen Henrietta Maria landed at Bridlington, bringing with her military stores and ammunition. She had sailed from Scheveningen with the great Admiral Tromp as escort, over a fortnight before; but, encountering heavy weather in the North Sea, had been driven back to her starting point before eventually making the passage. Newcastle had received instructions to meet the Queen, and to conduct her to a place of safety; but he had no idea at what point on the Yorkshire coast she would endeavour to land. It was therefore two days after her arrival in the bay before Newcastle reached Bridlington. The Queen had remained on board ship until she was assured of protection ashore. No sooner had she landed, however, than four small vessels of the enemy, contemptuously ignoring Tromp's large warship, which could not follow them into shallow water, stood well into the bay, and proceeded to bombard Bridlington. The Queen, with shot whistling about her, had to seek the shelter of a ditch outside the village. But after this, without further incident, she was conducted under Newcastle's escort to York, where she remained until the following May.[2]

After this Newcastle recommenced hostilities, being encouraged by the sudden decision of Sir Hugh Cholmley, who had been holding Scarborough for the Parliament, to come over to the King's side, which meant that an important fortress on the Yorkshire coast fell into Newcastle's possession. Still more important, there seemed every reason to anticipate a similar defection on the part of the Hothams. Beginning in December 1642, a curious and promising correspondence had been carried on between

[1] Rushworth, part III, vol. ii, pp. 139-41.

[2] *Life*, p. 18; *Letters of Henrietta Maria* (ed. Mrs. Everett Green, 1857), pp. 166-8.

Newcastle and the younger Hotham. It began with a proposal by the latter for an exchange of prisoners. He went on to explain his point of view with regard to the struggle. He honoured the King, but he also loved Parliament. Newcastle, in continuing the correspondence in the terms of extreme courtesy with which it had begun, must have felt that he might easily serve the King as profitably by writing these letters as by fighting a successful battle. Still more encouraging was Hotham's statement that if Parliament adopted an unreasonable attitude, he would declare himself plainly for the King. He indeed added that he could not possibly abandon the party with which he had been originally identified unless there were some overt cause to justify his doing so—no man of honour could do that; but his language clearly suggested that he rather regretted his original choice of allegiance, and only waited for a reasonable pretext to go over to the other.[1]

Although the Duchess ascribes the conversion of Cholmley to the 'rational and convincible arguments' which Newcastle propounded to him, there is no doubt that the argument which really induced him to come over was the supplies brought by Henrietta Maria; and certainly Hotham, already disposed to consider the possibility of a *volte-face*, was further influenced by the arrival of stores which made Newcastle stronger than ever in material. He came from Beverley, and, at an interview with the Earl at Bridlington, propounded the terms upon which he and his father were prepared to be bought—a viscounty and the governorship of Hull for life for Sir John; a barony for himself, and £20,000 in money.[2] Nothing came of this suggested bargain; but Newcastle tried to make things as easy as possible for the two likely recruits, by refraining from molesting the East Riding where they lay; while the

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. i, pp. 80, 83-4, 87.

[2] *Clarendon's State Papers*, p. 181.

Hothams, though they had the means and opportunity of harassing Newcastle's march from Bridlington to York with the Queen, did nothing to hinder it. After this Newcastle and young Hotham continued to correspond. Perhaps the Earl allowed himself to appear too confident of catching his fish, for Hotham became coy, and indulged in some virtuous protestations of inability to betray any public trust he had once undertaken. Was it an impish malevolence which induced him in the same letter to suggest that the Court, which Newcastle so loyally served and which he was endeavouring to induce the Hothams to support, was unworthy of such allegiance? He gave Newcastle a taste of the sort of things that were being said about him by persons close to the King, and subsequently detailed this ill-natured tittle-tattle—stories that Newcastle was indeed a sweet general, lying in bed till eleven, combing his hair till twelve, and leaving all the business to be done by General King.[1]

If the Hothams did not actually change sides, they at least refrained from activity, which was almost as useful to Newcastle. Sir Thomas Fairfax, referring to their treachery, remarks that although it was not discovered till some time after, it

> 'had almost ruined my father, and the forces with him. For, being now denied help and succour from Hull, and the East Riding, he was forced to forsake Selby, and retire to Leeds, and those western parts where I then lay'.[2]

To assist his father in this retirement and to draw attention upon himself, Sir Thomas made a diversion towards Tadcaster, which was successful in its object, for it brought Goring in chase after him. An engagement took place at Seacroft on 30 March, at which the Duchess claims that the

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. i, pp. 701-7, esp. p. 701.

[2] *Short Memorial* in Masères' *Tracts*, pp. 420-1.

enemy, though in much superior force, were completely routed. The defeat was indeed severe, and Fairfax admits that 'this was one of the greatest losses we ever received'. He adds, however: 'Yet was it a Providence that it was a part, and not the whole, of the forces, which received the loss.'[1] He was unduly modest. That result was due in large measure to his own self-sacrificing strategy. His father had been enabled to reach Leeds without let or hindrance. Had Newcastle perceived what was really happening and brought the whole of his army—now of some ten thousand men—into battle, the complete annihilation of the Fairfaxes must have been the almost inevitable result. As it was, their main body was intact, and Sir Thomas was able to bring the remnants of his force also to Leeds.

Newcastle now resolved to attack Leeds. But General King was strongly opposed to any such attempt. An assault, he considered, would be too dangerous, and might ruin the whole army by causing too great a slaughter, while a siege he regarded as out of the question, the town being of too large a circumference. The Queen and Lord Goring were all for making an effort to take the place; but Newcastle accepted the advice of his most experienced commander. However, if he failed to dislodge the Fairfaxes, he made good progress elsewhere in the West Riding—taking first Wakefield,[2] and then without much difficulty Rotherham, where he found considerable supplies of arms and of cash, and entering Sheffield without opposition—for the garrison fled into Derbyshire at the mere news of his approach.[3]

[1] *Short Memorial* in Masères' *Tracts*, p. 422.

[2] From Wakefield Newcastle paid a short visit to Welbeck, arriving there on 13 April. The Queen writes on 23 April to say that she is awaiting his return: 'he is gone to bury his wife, who has died, and is not yet returned.' *Letters of Henrietta Maria*, p. 188. See also *Mercurius Aulicus*, 25 April, 1643.

[3] *Life*, pp. 20-2; *Letters of Henrietta Maria*, pp. 189, 208-9.

From a painting by D. Mytens, 1624

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But now, when all seemed prospering, Newcastle sustained a serious reverse. So long as the Fairfaxes were left unbeaten, not one of Newcastle's conquests in the West Riding was really safe. On the night of 20 May Sir Thomas suddenly swooped down upon Wakefield, and although he had but a small force at his disposal, took the town, and captured the whole of its garrison (prisoners being more numerous than the assaulting troops), and a considerable quantity of ammunition. Overwhelmed by the magnitude of this success, the victor with his usual pious modesty concludes, 'seeing this was more a miracle than a victory, more the effect of God's providence than human force, or prudence, let the Honour and praise of all be his only'.[1]

The loss of Wakefield was highly disconcerting to Newcastle; it meant that his recent good work was undone; that his second attempt against the West Riding had failed. Once more he returned to York. He now sustained a further loss of a different kind. The time had come for Henrietta Maria to rejoin her husband, and a strong escort had to be provided to protect her on her journey from York to Oxford. While naturally anxious to fulfil his obligation of providing for the Queen's safety, Newcastle was reluctant to spare any large number of men for the purpose, particularly as his own affairs in Yorkshire were not prospering; and as the King insisted upon the provision of a larger contingent than Henrietta Maria herself had at first thought necessary, the arrangements seem to have caused some trouble and friction. The Queen complained that there was a lack of understanding in the Earl's army as to the situation; she was not deserting Yorkshire, but doing, as they all must, something for the general good. Eventually when she set out from York on 4 June, she was accompanied, not only by her own two regiments, amount-

[1] See *Short Memorial* in Masères' *Tracts*, pp. 423-4.

ing to some two thousand men, but by a considerable contingent provided by Newcastle. The Duchess declares that, in all, the force amounted to 7,000 men, but this seems to be an exaggeration; probably Newcastle's contribution to the escort was no more than 2,500 or 3,000 men.[1] The journey took a considerable time, for upwards of a fortnight was spent at Newark *en route*, so that Oxford was not reached till 14 July. But the most serious feature of the whole episode from Newcastle's point of view was that the loss of the troops he sent with the Queen proved to be more than temporary, for the King, having got them at Oxford, retained them. When the first battle of Newbury took place on 20 September, Henrietta Maria at once wrote to the Earl to offer him consolation for the loss, in that some of the men whom she had brought south with her had taken part in the engagement, and had 'not done badly'.[2]

By that time Newcastle had carried out some energetic recruiting, restored his numbers, and gained the most signal success of his whole military career. After taking by storm Howley House, a Parliamentarian stronghold between Wakefield and Leeds, on 22 June he prepared to attack Bradford with a force which Thomas Fairfax computes as of ten to twelve thousand men. As they had neither troops nor provisions sufficient to stand a siege, the Fairfaxes decided to withdraw from the town, and to give battle in the open; and severe fighting took place at Adwalton, or Atherton Moor, on 30 June.[3] The battle began favourably for the Fairfaxes, the broken nature of the country almost entirely immobilizing Newcastle's

[1] *Letters of Henrietta Maria*, pp. 180-91, 201-2, 211-12, 218, 222; *Life*, p. 23 and note by Firth.

[2] Brit. Mus., Harleian MS.6988, f. 157.

[3] *Life*, pp. 24-6; *Short Memorial* in Masères' *Tracts*, p. 426; *Portland MSS*, vol. i, pp. 717-19.

cavalry; but he had great superiority in total numbers, and a vigorous charge, pressed home by fresh troops, drove the enemy from the field in desperate flight—desperate because, although they made good their retreat to Bradford, only three miles away, that town could afford no asylum, and Hull, their natural place of refuge, was in the hands of Sir John Hotham, who was playing false, and would not permit them to enter the gates. The combined effects of the victory of Atherton Moor and the treachery of the Hothams, which Newcastle had so industriously fomented, might well have meant the entire destruction of the Parliamentary forces in Yorkshire had not the citizens of Hull risen against their governor, and admitted the remnants of the retreating army.

Once more the possession of Hull proved to be of great importance in the Civil War. The double dealing of the Hothams was now discovered, and after they had been held in prison for some time, they were both executed in January, 1644. Hull was once again firmly held for the Parliament. It was the only stronghold left in Yorkshire; for as a result of Atherton Moor, Leeds, Halifax and Wakefield were all abandoned. During the general retirement into the East Riding Sir Thomas Fairfax's wife was taken captive. But in those days war was waged with a fine appreciation of its opportunities for chivalry and courtesy, and not many days after Sir Thomas's own arrival in Hull, after many fatigues and difficulties, Newcastle sent his lady to him, 'in his coach with some horses to guard her; which generous act of his gained him more reputation than he could have got by detaining a lady prisoner'.[1] Newcastle was now master of Yorkshire as he had never been before. At no other time did the fortunes of the Royalists in the Civil War stand so high. Prince Rupert soon after captured

[1] *Short Memorial* in Masères' *Tracts*, p. 431.

Bristol, and there was the prospect of bringing converging forces against London. The King was resolved that the recent victories should be used to the fullest advantage, and ordered Newcastle to advance through the eastern counties, so as to block the capital from the north. There was a further argument in favour of bringing Newcastle's army into the east, for in the interests of efficiency the Parliamentarians were forming an Eastern Counties Association, which became the nucleus of Oliver Cromwell's New Model. The process was as yet not far advanced, and a successful Royalist blow struck in this neighbourhood might have prevented the reforms from ever being completed. Moreover, a considerable Royalist following existed in those parts, who only 'wish'd for an opportunity to express their loyalty'.[1]

But now the intensity of local feeling, which was so important a factor in the Civil Wars, proved the undoing of the King's hopes. The men of the west country, notwithstanding that Bristol had been taken, were reluctant to advance eastward, because Plymouth and Exeter were still in the enemy's hands; and in like manner the Yorkshiremen disliked the idea of leaving their own county so long as the Fairfaxes held out in Hull. There were apparently other reasons for Newcastle's backwardness in obeying the commands, which the King sent both by letter and by the mouth of Sir Philip Warwick, who arrived on a special commission to urge the Earl to move southward. It is a curious fact that Henrietta Maria, while transmitting the King's instructions to Newcastle, urged him to ignore them. Thus she writes in August

> 'He [the King] had written me to send you word to go into Suffolk, *Norfolk* or *Huntingdonshire*. I answered him that you were a better judge than he of that, and

[1] *Warwick's Memoirs*, pp. 242-3.

that I should not do it. The truth is that they envy your army.'[1]

The consciousness that there were those who envied his army and his independent command seems to have been one of the most potent motives of Newcastle's conduct. Sir Philip Warwick found him very averse to the project of advancing southwards,

> 'and perceived that he apprehended nothing more, than to be joyn'd to the King's army, and to serve under Prince Rupert;[2] for he designed himself to be the man that should turn the scale, and to be a self-subsisting, and distinct army wherever he was. . . . By severall stories and expressions he made, I discovered he was bottom'd upon this ground, and would not be brought from it.[3]

And yet Newcastle did not entirely repudiate the idea of a southward march; indeed he told Warwick that 'when he could quit Yorkshire, and leave it in a condition to defend itself', he would march through Lincolnshire into Norfolk and Suffolk, and the Association Counties.[4]

Eventually he did begin to execute this 'noble design'. The Royalist troops in Lincolnshire were commanded by his very valiant cousin, son of the Earl of Devonshire, Colonel Charles Cavendish. In an encounter with Cromwell on 28 July Cavendish was defeated and killed. The

[1] *Letters of Henrietta Maria*, p. 225. Compare a similar encouragement to disobey the King in the previous June, p. 219.

[2] At the same time Newcastle wrote rather fulsome congratulations to Rupert on his successes—e.g. E. Warburton, *Prince Rupert* (3 vols., 1849), vol. ii, p. 309: 'You are the more victorious that you will not give me leave to tell you of your victories, but all the world knows them and will speak of them, whether your Highness will or no, so great a Prince as you are, Sir.' They will redound to his 'everlasting fame'. He expresses his happiness to enjoy the Prince's favour and will study to deserve it.

[3] *Warwick's Memoirs*, p. 243.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 244-5.

town of Gainsborough had been seized by Parliamentarian forces under Lord Willoughby of Parham on 16 July; the Royalists then besieged it, and Cavendish had met his death in an attempt to prevent its relief. Hastened by the news of the disaster to Cavendish, Newcastle nearly cut off Cromwell, who was taken by surprise and had to retreat precipitately, and on 30 July he took Gainsborough. On the surrender of this town, Willoughby made his way to Lincoln; but his troops were greatly disheartened, and there was no prospect of succour from Cromwell.[1] The result was that Newcastle took Lincoln without difficulty. The Parliamentarians being on the run, there seemed to be every reason to expect further important successes in the eastern counties; indeed it seems quite possible that, had Newcastle followed up his advantage with rapidity and determination, the war might have been won for the King before the end of 1643.[2] But once again Hull proved the stumbling-block. The earl's troops were largely Yorkshiremen; they were nervous of the situation in their rear, and they had no heart for the enterprise of marching on London. Then came the news of a Parliamentarian raid on Stamford Bridge. The nobility and gentry of Yorkshire became importunate for Newcastle's return, not appreciating the fact that could London but be taken, all their anxieties about the position in their own county would be removed for ever. Newcastle yielded; leaving a contingent in Lincolnshire, he brought his main forces back into the East Riding, with the object of capturing Hull. But it was a vain hope. So long as the Parliament held command of the sea and had access to the town along

[1] *Life*, pp. 27-8; Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, part III, vol. ii, p. 278.

[2] There is a useful map showing Newcastle's movements in the campaign of 1642-44 in A. C. Wood's *Nottinghamshire in the Civil War* (Oxford, 1937), p. 65.

the Humber, purely military efforts against Hull were bound to fail. Thus, in abandoning the scene of operations in Lincolnshire and returning to the East Riding, Newcastle was abandoning an enterprise which, if carried through with speed, resolution, and energy, might have been decisive, for one which could only be fruitless. The first act in the drama of Newcastle's military career is a story of lost opportunities; the second is that of a losing struggle against heavy odds.

Chapter V

THE FIRST DUKE OF NEWCASTLE AND THE CIVIL WAR, AUGUST 1643 TO JULY 1644

For the protection of Hull Sir Thomas Fairfax held an advance post, ten miles to the north-westward, at Beverley. With his much superior numbers Newcastle had no difficulty in dislodging Fairfax on 25 August. He then followed up the retreating enemy slowly, and sat down to the siege of Hull on 2 September. He was kept at a considerable distance because the defenders opened the sluices, and flooded the country for two miles around. However, the main highway, being embanked, was above the flood level, and along this the Earl was able to push some of his men close enough 'to shoot cannon shot at random into the town, and, for the most part, hot bullets. But, by the diligence and care of the Governour, who caused every inhabitant to watch his own house, the danger was prevented'.[1] The flooding of the district and bad weather made the situation of the besiegers exceedingly uncomfortable. Sir Philip Warwick paid Newcastle a visit;

> 'went down to see his trenches and works, and found (the season having been very wet) his men standing ankle deep in dirt a great distance from the town; so as I conceived those without were likelier to rot than those within to starve; and by assault there was not the least

[1] *Short Memorial* in Masères' *Tracts*, p. 432; *Life*, p. 30.

probability to carry it. Upon my return to him, relating but faintly and modestly my thoughts (for he knew I had not the least part of a soldier to warrant a discourse upon that subject) he merrily put it off saying, "You often hear us called the Popish Army; but you see we trust not in our good works." [1]

Newcastle might keep a firm upper lip, and make jest of the miserable conditions to which he and his men were reduced; but events speedily occurred which proved how serious a blunder it had been to leave Lincolnshire for the hopeless attack on Hull. The siege conditions rendering the cavalry in the town completely useless, and the neighbouring pastures being under water so that no fodder was obtainable, Fairfax and his horse were transferred by sea to Lincolnshire, where they joined Cromwell's cavalry under the Earl of Manchester's command. They were thus able to take part in the important battle of Winceby, fought on 11 October, Cromwell's first notable victory, which resulted in the loss of both Gainsborough and Lincoln to the Royalists and the blockade of Newark. Six days after the engagement at Winceby the Hull garrison made a bold sally, captured many of the guns of the besieging army, and destroyed some of their works. The blow was so severe that Newcastle decided that further efforts against Hull were useless, and accordingly the siege was raised on that day, 11 October.[2]

A fortnight after this, Newcastle being at York, there was issued his patent as a Marquess, in recognition of his great services to the Crown since the War began. After spending a few days in York, he transferred his attention to Derbyshire, on the news that the enemy had been

[1] *Warwick's Memoirs*, pp. 294-5.

[2] See *Portland MSS.*, vol. i, pp. 138-9; B. Whitelock, *Memorials* (4 vols., Oxford, 1833), vol. i, p. 213. The Duchess makes no reference in her biography to this disastrous episode.

making considerable progress in that county. He made Chesterfield his headquarters, after driving some forces under Sir Thomas Fairfax out of the neighbourhood. He also sent contingents against Alfreton and into the Peak District, securing Wingfield and Chatsworth. But his main purpose was to raise sufficient troops in the county to enable the King's men to defend themselves, and in this purpose he succeeded. The whole of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, except Nottingham itself, were secured for the King. In December he moved to Bolsover, and then on to Welbeck, 'to his own house and garrison, in which parts he stayed some time, both to refresh his army and to settle and reform some disorders he found there'.[1]

Newcastle, as we have already seen, had paid a previous visit to Welbeck in that same year, for the sorrowful purpose of burying his wife, also possibly to garrison and fortify the house; and he had stayed on afterwards for a little time in order to carry on the intrigue with young Hotham by means of a further personal meeting.[2] The Duchess refers to Welbeck as a 'garrison' in the passage just quoted, and an important garrison it remained until the very end of the Civil War, one of the most important Royalist strongholds in Nottinghamshire, held in her father's absence by the courageous Lady Jane Cavendish.

It was while he was spending these winter months at Welbeck that Newcastle received the very unwelcome intelligence of a new development, which was to have disastrous consequences for the Royalist cause and to affect his own fortunes very prejudicially. The Parliamentary leaders, realizing that, if the King had not been able to suppress them, neither had they been able to get the better of him, were anxious to obtain some substantial reinforcement, and after rather prolonged haggling as to the terms

[1] *Life*, p. 32, and appendix vi; *Life of Hutchinson*, p. 159.

[2] *Letters of Henrietta Maria*, p. 188.

upon which the Scots could be induced to enter the war on their side, had, upon 25 September, concluded the treaty which is known as the Solemn League and Covenant. Newcastle appears to have had early intimation of the Scots' intention to invade England. He had been urged by the Marquess of Hamilton to forestall the invaders by seizing Carlisle and Berwick; but he had been unwilling to precipitate matters without definite instructions from the King. Before any move was made by the Royalists, the Scots army occupied Berwick; it crossed the border on 19 January, 1644.[1] Immediately the King's supporters in Yorkshire called upon Newcastle to come again to their protection, promising to put a new army of 10,000 men into the field. The Marquess did not put much confidence in such an undertaking, which in fact was never fulfilled. But he hastened back to Yorkshire, and indeed the task of endeavouring to hold back the invaders obviously devolved upon him as the King's commander-in-chief north of the Trent. Raising what forces he could, and making as good provision as time allowed for the defence of Yorkshire itself, he hastened to Newcastle, which the Scots reached on 3 February. He had now such a problem to deal with as he had not met heretofore. He had hitherto always possessed superiority of numbers, and as a rule also the initiative. Now he was outnumbered; he was on the defensive; and there was a danger of his being caught between two fires.

The best chance which the Royalists had of keeping the Scots at bay lay in their being able to find reinforcements, and in November the Earl of Ormonde had been able to ship five Irish regiments over to the Welsh coast. They landed at Mostyn, and then came under the command of Lord Byron, the Royalist governor of Chester. This new army advanced to Nantwich, which they besieged. Sir

[1] *Memoirs of Warwick*, p. 267; *Life*, p. 33, editor's note.

Thomas Fairfax was dispatched to relieve the town, and he soundly defeated Byron on 26 January, 1644, subsequently retrieving the whole situation in Cheshire. He was then ordered back into Yorkshire, in order that his horse and dragoons might co-operate with the Scots against the Marquess of Newcastle, whose hope of succour from the Welsh border he had effectively dissipated.[1] The Scots seem to have outnumbered Newcastle by more than two to one; but he had an advantage in cavalry, and he used this for the purpose of interfering with the enemy's communications and supply system, sometimes with considerable success, so that the invaders were badly stinted for provisions. On the other hand, he could hardly expect to meet them in the open field without serious risk of complete defeat,[2] especially as they were under the command of that cautious, but experienced and sagacious commander, Alexander Leslie, now Earl of Leven. He might hamper and impede their advance; he could not prevent it. The very day of his arrival at Newcastle the Scots attacked the town. The assault was a failure—accounts vary as to how bad the failure was. According to the Duchess, the invaders, with no idea that they had any opposition whatsoever to face, attacked precipitately and were repulsed with heavy loss: whereupon the Marquess prepared a counter-attack, which miscarried by reason of 'so much treachery, juggling, and falsehood in my Lord's own army, that it was impossible for him to be successful in his designs and undertakings'. She nevertheless credits him with routing the

[1] *Life*, p. 33; *Short Relation* in Masères' *Tracts*, pp. 434-6; Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, vol. ii, p. 455; Warburton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 504.

[2] On 13 February Newcastle wrote to ask the King whether he should play a defensive game, relying upon receiving assistance, or 'whether upon this great inequality, we shall adventure to hazard the loss of the army, and so of all the north, by giving them battle'. Warburton, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 481.

Scottish cavalry and taking 1,500 prisoners.[1] She probably exaggerates the extent of his success. Whitelock tells a very different story.[2] In any case the object of the invaders was not the capture of the town of Newcastle, or of any other particular town, but simply a further penetration into the heart of England. The Marquess hoped that the wintry weather—first, heavy snow, then thaw and floods—would render that advance impracticable.[3] But neither those difficulties nor the interference with his commissariat occasioned by his adversary's cavalry raids, deflected Leven from his purpose.

Could Newcastle hold up the Scots' advance on the line of the Tyne? Henrietta Maria, writing to him in agitated fashion, and warning him that Sir Thomas Fairfax was marching north to join the invaders, exclaimed that if once the Scots crossed the Tees, 'there will be no more remedy'.[4] The Marquess found that in the twelve miles of country between Newcastle and Hexham the Tyne was fordable in so many places that it was quite impossible with his small force of infantry to guard them all. He could not prevent the passage of the river by the enemy, who made their way through Chester-le-Street to Sunderland, which they reached on 4 March. Newcastle now decided to bring the enemy to battle in the hilly country above the town; but in the heavily falling snow, which made life bitter for both men and animals, he found the Scots drawn up in such impregnable positions that he could not hope to dislodge them, and retired to Durham. Here he had an interview with the gallant Montrose, who hoped to obtain from him for his own operations some assistance in money, arms, ammunition, and men. Hard-pressed himself, New-

[1] *Life*, p. 34. [2] *Memorials*, vol. i, p. 244.

[3] See *Life*. See also C. S. Terry, *Life of Alexander Leslie* (1899), pp. 185-214.

[4] *Letters of Henrietta Maria*, p. 238.

castle was naturally reluctant to part with anything, but he did hand over two hundred horse and dragoons.[1]

While these events were taking place in the north-east, the news which reached the Royalist headquarters in Oxford was scant and misleading. It was reported that Newcastle's situation was excellent; that he had had several encounters with the Scots, and had in each case got the better of them; that he had almost surrounded them at Sunderland: finally, that he had totally defeated them. Such were the pleasing rumours of the second and third weeks of March.[2] A month later came news of the reality: that the Marquess was back in York; that he was in 'a sad condition'; that Leven and Fairfax had effected a junction.[3] Newcastle might have been able to maintain contact with the Scots, slowly retreating before them, and giving them a considerable amount of trouble. Fairfax goes so far as to suggest that owing to his superiority in cavalry the Marquess was almost able to bring them to a standstill; and he might have done so had not a disaster occurred in Yorkshire. Newcastle had left Colonel John Bellasyse (the future Lord Bellasyse) as Governor of York and commander of the troops in the county, and had instructed him to act entirely on the defensive. The Governor's resources were more than adequate for the purpose; but he rashly endeavoured to hold Selby, a difficult town to defend, was utterly defeated by Fairfax, and himself together with the majority of his men was taken prisoner.[4] On the news of this calamity, Newcastle made for York, which he had

[1] Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, part III, vol. ii, pp. 615-16; *Life*, p. 35; and appendix, pp. 200-2, Newcastle's own account of these events; H.M.C., *Eglinton MSS.*, p. 53.

[2] *C.S.P.D.*, *1644*, pp. 54, 63. Sir Richard Nicholas to Patrick Ruthven.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 131.

[4] *Life*, pp. 35-6; *Short Memorial* in Masères' *Tracts*, p. 437; Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, part III, vol. ii, p. 618.

feared might fall into the hands of the enemy. He arrived on 19 April, and the following day Leven and Fairfax met at Tadcaster.

During the last few weeks the Marquess had had a very difficult task to perform, and, so far as we can judge, he had carried it through as well as his limited resources allowed. He had shewn courage, tenacity, and some resourcefulness, and no episode in his whole career does him greater credit. Moreover, he had had to conduct the campaign, knowing that malicious tongues and pens at Court were busy saying bitter things against him; and, as the King put it in answer to a letter in which he had apparently suggested resigning his command in view of this malignant criticism, 'the Scots are not the only, or (it may be said) the least ennemies you contest withall at this tyme'. Charles had assured the Marquess that if either he or Lord Eythin resigned, the Royalist cause in the north was lost, and had told him to 'remember all courage is not in fighting; constancy in a good cause being the cheefe, and the dispysing of slanderous tongues and pennes being not the least ingredient'.[1] It must have been extraordinarily galling to Newcastle, when in the depth of winter he was battling amid snow and flood to keep the Scottish invaders at bay in the north of England, to find that he was being defamed by envious backbiters in the circle which surrounded the King at Oxford. If in the earlier stages of the campaign he had sometimes laid himself open to the charge of not fully appreciating the amount of concentration demanded of a general in the field, certainly of late he had been experiencing the harsh rigours of warfare. There was a natural temptation to resign the cares of a command which, whatever may have been its original attractiveness, had now become increasingly burdensome and responsible; but un-

[1] Brit. Mus., Harleian MSS., 6988, f. 173; Ellis, *Original Letters*, series I, vol. iii, p. 298.

doubtedly the King had need of the continued services of the Marquess of Newcastle in the spring and summer of 1644 as never before.

The combined armies of Leven and Fairfax were, shortly after their junction, enlarged by the appearance of the army from the Associated Counties under the Earl of Manchester, with Cromwell in command of its cavalry. By these three armies York was now invested, and Newcastle had to stand a siege. The town had a considerable *enceinte*, and the numbers of the defending forces were fairly large, so that the task of the besiegers was not entirely simple. Newcastle deliberately reduced the strength of his command by sending away his cavalry as being useless to him. It was now under Sir Charles Lucas, his future brother-in-law, who had but recently joined him.[1] These troops were despatched into Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, and Leicestershire for their subsistence, and subsequently came under the orders of Lord Goring, and were attached to the army under Prince Rupert which the King despatched for the relief of York. The fate of the city depended upon the rapidity and the success of Rupert's movements. The Parliamentarians, as we know, did not feel too happy as to the situation. What would happen if Rupert eluded the forces sent to head him off; or even if he failed to reach York and moved, for example, into Cheshire? Might it not be necessary to send the armies at present in Yorkshire in pursuit of him; and, if that happened, might not Newcastle slip out of York and become as formidable as ever?[2] It was not, then, only the beleagured garrison at York that felt anxiety as to the prospects. On the other hand, shut off as they were from the rest of the world, they necessarily had the greater cause for anxiety.

Newcastle had to pay earnest attention to the question of

[1] *Life*, p. 36; Warburton's *Prince Rupert*, vol. ii, p. 370.
[2] Cf. *C.S.P.D.*, *1644*, p. 207.

provisioning the troops and the citizens, and captured soldiers were soon telling the Parliamentarians of privations within the city, of its defenders being put upon a ration of one meal a day. The truth was that the Marquess and Lord Eythin, having made a search of the whole town for victuals, had commandeered them all for distribution to the people, so that the food supply was 'so well ordered by my Lord's prudence, that no famine or great extremity of want ensued'. Nevertheless it was obvious that if relief were not forthcoming before long serious scarcity must inevitably ensue.[1] But the attacking armies were not disposed to wait for famine to operate in their favour; they hoped to be able to take York by direct assault, since time was not necessarily a factor in their favour. They came in close to the gates of the city, planted their batteries of heavy artillery not far from the walls, 'and threw in grenadoes at pleasure'.[2] On their side the defenders made several successful sallies. One of these Whitelocke succeeds in representing as an attempt at escape by Newcastle, Sir Thomas Widdrington, 'and other chief commanders', supported by a strong party: but the suggestion that the generals made an attempt to break through the cordon of the besiegers, leaving York to its fate, is fantastic.[3] At last the Parliamentarians decided to force their way into the city. They blew up St. Mary's Tower, and, effecting in this way a breach in the defences on the north side, entered the Manor House. But the attack was made in too great haste and in insufficient strength by a general anxious to obtain all the credit for what was prematurely reckoned upon as a complete success. Newcastle in person dealt with the danger with great promptitude, bringing a contingent of his own regiment of White Coats to the breach, driving the assailants back, and inflicting losses on them, estimated by

[1] H.M.C., *Eglinton MSS.*, p. 54. [2] *Life*, p. 37.
[3] *Whitelocke's Memorials*, vol. i, p. 266.

the enemy at about two hundred or three hundred, and by the Duchess at fifteen hundred.[1]

While thus successfully withstanding the strongest efforts of the besiegers, Newcastle was prepared to treat, provided he could get honourable terms, and a negotiation was opened on 8 June. He demanded that the troops in York should be allowed to march away with drums beating and colours flying, with arms, ammunition and baggage, in order to join either the King or Prince Rupert; that all citizens within the town should be allowed liberty of conscience; that the prebends of the cathedral should enjoy their places; and that the use of the liturgy, of organs, copes, surplices, crosses, etc., should be continued.[2] The Marquess cannot have expected for one moment that such propositions would prove acceptable, and his only object in making them must have been to gain time. The Parliament's generals made the counter-proposals that the Marquess himself and all the other commanders should be allowed to ride out of the city on horseback, wearing their swords; but that the common soldiers should be armed only with staves, and should have a month's pay in their pockets; and that everything else must be left behind. These terms on 15 June Newcastle refused, as being such as no person of honour could possibly condescend to accept.

There is no need in a short account of the life of the Marquess to describe the different incidents of the siege of York. At length the siege was raised on 1 July by the near approach of the army of Prince Rupert, the Parliamentarian allies moving away towards Tadcaster. Newcastle, who had certainly in former days evinced reluctance

[1] *Life*, p. 37; Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, part III, vol. iii, p. 631.

[2] Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, part III, vol. ii, pp. 624-31; *Whitelocke's Memorials*, p. 91. Newcastle's first suggestion for a parley was refused because he addressed it to Leven and Fairfax, ignoring Manchester. *C.S.P.D., 1644*, p. 224.

to co-operate with Rupert, seems to have viewed his arrival with mingled feelings. On the one hand, relief, by whomsoever it might be brought, was inexpressibly welcome; on the other hand, the arrival of the Prince would appear to have been greeted 'more politely than cordially',[1] though Newcastle wrote, as he was bound to do, a letter of gratitude for his deliverance: 'May it please your Highness, you are welcome, sir, in many several ways, as it is beyond my arithmetic to number, but this I know, you are the Redeemer of the North, and the Saviour of the Crown.' His Highness had, said Newcastle, terrified three generals into flight, and they had carefully placed a river (the Ouse) between them and the Prince. What their future intentions might be he could not conjecture; he was 'made of nothing but thankfulness and obedience to your Highness's commands'.[2]

The story of the relations between Rupert and Newcastle at this juncture forms an unhappy, and indeed tragic, conclusion to that of the successful defence of York. There may have been jealousy on both sides, a disposition on the part of the one to vaunt his merit in having relieved the city, and on the other to dwell overmuch upon his own virtues in defending it; and the differences which ensued between the two were not due solely to discordant ideas of military policy. But their divergence of view on that subject proved to be fundamental. Newcastle formed the view that the allied generals were bent solely on retirement, and that they ought to be allowed to retreat without molestation. At any rate he desired his Highness 'not to attempt anything as yet upon the enemy'. His advice was based partly on the fact that he was expecting substantial reinforcements from the north, for whose arrival he thought they ought to wait; partly on the ground of intelligence he

[1] Warburton, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 442.

[2] *The Pythouse Papers* (1879), p. 19.

had received that the Parliament's generals were quarrelling among themselves, that there was no good feeling between the English and their Scottish confederates, and that in consequence they were 'resolved to divide themselves'. It was Clarendon's opinion that if Rupert had only been content to remain impassive 'the Enemy's great Army would have moulder'd to nothing, and been exposed to any advantage his Highness would take of them'.[1]

Whether the conduct of the Parliamentarian generals would have been as supine as Newcastle imagined, we may well doubt; but the course of subsequent events certainly suggests that his advice was sound, and that the King's cause might have been saved had this cautious policy been adopted. Unhappily Rupert conceived himself to be under an obligation to fight immediately, and he construed the instructions which he had received from the King as a positive order to do so.[2] It is difficult to see how Charles's letter could be so construed; but Newcastle had to accept, and in fact did accept, the Prince's positive assurance. It was not until the very day of the fatal battle of Marston Moor that Rupert and Newcastle met in person, the latter having ridden out to meet the Prince. Clarendon made some rough notes, presumably based upon the accounts of eye-witnesses, of the interview.[3] The Prince exclaimed

[1] *Life*, p. 38; Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, vol. ii, p. 508; 'Memorials of Sir Hugh Cholmley', printed in *English Historical Review*, vol. v, pp. 345-51.

[2] See Warburton, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 437, 451-2. The King wrote: 'If York be lost I shall esteem my crown little less; unless supported by your sudden march to me; and a miraculous conquest in the south, before the effects of their northern power can be found here. But if York be relieved, and you beat the rebels' army of both kingdoms, which are before it; then (but otherwise not) I may possibly make a shift (upon the defensive) to spin out time until you come to assist me.'

[3] Account from the *Clarendon State Papers*. See editor's note to *Life*, p. 39.

cheerfully, 'My Lord, I hope we shall have a glorious day.' When reasons were urged against fighting at all, he brushed them aside with the retort, 'Nothing venture, nothing have.' When Lord Eythin rode up, Rupert produced a paper showing his dispositions for the battle. Eythin observed, 'My God, sir, it is very fine in the paper, but there is no such thing in the field.' The Marquess asked what the Prince proposed to do, to which the reply was, 'We will charge them tomorrow morning.' Whether Rupert's plans were sound or unsound, he was never given any chance to carry them out; for the battle began, not on the following morning, but that very evening.

Rupert had hoped to be in a position to attack early that day, but he had been unable to marshal his forces in time. On the previous night—1 July—the enemy had been encamped near the village of Long Marston, their objective being the line of the river Wharfe, which they were prepared to hold against any attempt on the part of Rupert to return southward. Next day they were proceeding towards Tadcaster when their rearguard under Cromwell found itself being harried by Royalist cavalry. Thereupon the whole army retraced its steps, afraid of being caught in column of route, and formed up upon Marston Moor between the villages of Long Marston and Tockwith. Afternoon came on, and a considerable part of the York garrison had not joined up with Rupert's army. The reason was that some of them were half-mutinous, demanding arrears of pay. Rupert and Newcastle eventually pacified the malcontents, and brought them on to the field. It was not until five o'clock that Newcastle himself appeared, driven to the scene of battle in a coach and six. Some of his friends had endeavoured to dissuade him from taking any part in the forthcoming engagement, on the ground that his command was in effect being taken from him. He 'answered them, that happen what would, he would not shun to

fight, for he had no other ambition than to live and die a loyal subject to his Majesty'.[1]

A sharp thunderstorm came on, accompanied by heavy rain, and an encounter that evening seemed more than ever unlikely. Prince Rupert, as we have already seen, had no intention of attacking till next day. Newcastle, after his consultation with the Prince, returned to the shelter of his coach, and took out his pipe for a quiet smoke, intending to rest there until the dawn. But he had hardly entered his coach when, at about seven o'clock, he heard 'a great noise and thunder of shooting, which gave him notice of the armies being engaged'. Whether the battle was started by the deliberate intention of the Parliamentarian generals, or arose spontaneously as the result of the desultory exchange of shots between two opposing forces ranged very closely opposite one another, and separated only by a ditch, we do not know. That, like many other details of the battle of Marston Moor, is obscure; accounts are very conflicting. Immediately he heard the noise, Newcastle armed himself and mounted his horse. He discovered that already serious things were happening. The Royalist cavalry on the left wing under Goring were splendidly successful, carrying all before them, and before long a disordered mass of the Parliament's infantry was being pursued down the Tadcaster road by Royalist horse, who imagined that Marston Moor had been a complete victory for the King. As they returned from their hot pursuit, however, they found themselves attacked, and discovered that the battle they had seen and won was only one part of the fray; the more important part had been lost in their absence. For while on the Royalist left Goring had achieved complete and rapid success, and while in the centre, where Newcastle's own White Coats fought, the Royalist line held firmly; on the right, the Parliamentarian cavalry under Cromwell and

[1] *Life*, p. 39.

Sir Charles Cavendish the Younger,
died 1654

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David Leslie, won the battle of Marston Moor. Cromwell's first attack had been met by a counter-attack by Rupert in person. Had that counter-attack been entirely successful, the Royalists would have achieved success on both wings; Marston Moor would have been a great triumph for the King, and Rupert might indeed have been acclaimed a second Gustavus Adolphus.[1] Unfortunately for him, his counter-attack resulted in the formation of a gap between the cavalry and the infantry on the left. Of that gap full advantage was taken by Leslie and Cromwell. A rent was made in the Royalist line; Rupert's cavalry, taken in flank, was driven off in flight, the infantry was attacked in rear and routed.

The battle was soon over; but it began so suddenly and its course was so confused, that few of the combatants can have had the slightest idea of what was happening except in their own immediate neighbourhood. Newcastle was never able to reach his own regiment of White Coats; in his endeavour to do so he met cavalry, fleeing before Cromwell's charge, and endeavoured to rally them—to no purpose. Then, accompanied only by his brother Charles Cavendish, two other officers, and his own page, he came across a troop of gentlemen volunteers, and these he led into the thick of the *mêlée*, and engaged some of the Scottish infantry, whom, the Duchess declares, they charged and routed. They were among the last to leave the stricken field.

The blackness of the disaster was relieved by one great and heroic episode. The centre of the Royalist army was mainly composed of men who had fought under Newcastle, and the pick of them were the White Coats. These veterans resolutely stood their ground when everything was lost on

[1] For the details of the battle of Marston Moor see paper by Sir C. Firth in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, n.s., vol. xii, pp. 17-79, and authorities there cited.

all sides, and made a magnificent fight to the death. Being in a small area, ditched in and therefore difficult of access by cavalry, they took full advantage of the ground, and by their valour, for the space of a whole hour, kept the enemy at bay, slaying many of them. When at last, after they had lost very heavily under a constant shower of bullets, the Parliamentarian cavalry broke in among them, they asked for no quarter, but fought it out till scarcely any of them were left alive, and the very few survivors were saved in spite of themselves by the efforts of their admiring foes.[1] It is one of Newcastle's chief titles to fame that these heroes of Marston Moor were his own particular men, and that the desperate courage with which they fought their last magnificent fight was a reflex of their utter devotion to him.

The Duchess tells us that 'their love and affection to my Lord was such, that it lasted even when he was deprived of all his power, and could do them little good', and in illustration of this she narrates the following anecdote. When Newcastle was living in exile at Antwerp, a gentleman visited him to thank him for his escape at sea. The Marquess was amazed. The gentleman then explained that when he was coming over from England he had been set upon by pirates; but when, upon their questioning him, he had said that he knew the Marquess of Newcastle well, and was bound for the same city where he lived,

> 'they did not only take nothing from him, but used him with all civility, and desired him to remember their humble duty to their Lord General, for they were some of his White Coats that had escaped death; and if my Lord had any service for them, they were ready to assist him upon what designs soever, and to obey him in whatsoever he should be pleased to command them'.[2]

[1] See *Diary of William Lilly* (1822), p. 178; James Heath, *A Chronicle of the late Intestine War* (1675).

[2] *Life*, p. 85.

Newcastle gave his all at Marston Moor, and the one redeeming feature of the battle from the point of view of the Royalists was the splendid bravery of the most finely disciplined men in the whole army, the men whom the Marquess had trained. Their sacrifice had been glorious; but after all they had been sacrificed—they had been annihilated. Newcastle's thoughts as he made his way back to York that night must have been exceedingly bitter. He had been convinced of the utter unwisdom of fighting an unnecessary battle. His advice had been disregarded by the young, self-confident Rupert, and how dire were the consequences! Newcastle's mind may well have turned to the previous year—when he had been exhorted to march south, and to merge his army with Rupert's; he had been strongly criticised for preferring to retain his independent command. On this occasion he had utterly subordinated himself to Rupert; had allowed him to take complete control; had handed over his own men to the Prince's will. He had himself fought not as a commander, but as a private individual. And Rupert had destroyed his army and ruined all the King's hopes in the north! He was filled with passionate resentment and despair as he thought of the utter, senseless destruction of the splendid instrument which he himself had created for the service of the King.

Near York Newcastle came upon Prince Rupert and Lord Ethyn, and they discussed the day's disaster. Ethyn asked the Prince what he proposed to do. He replied: 'I will rally my men.' Ethyn then asked, 'Now, what will you, Lord Newcastle, do?' The Marquess replied, 'I will go to Holland,' for he looked upon all as lost. The Prince endeavoured to persuade him to recruit his forces. 'No,' cried Newcastle, 'I will not endure the laughter of the Court.'[1] The carping criticisms, and the ridicule to which he had

[1] For this conversation see Warburton's *Prince Rupert*, vol. ii, pp. 466-8.

been subjected, had rankled deep, and on the night of Marston Moor the remembrance of them tormented him insupportably, more than ever before. Hitherto, if he had bitterly resented the fault-finding, at the same time he had felt that he could afford to despise the malice of his calumniators, as the powerful commander of the King's northern army; and there may have been always in his mind the possibility that some day he would make his adversaries look very foolish when he should appear in London at the head of a triumphant army, restoring the monarch to his own capital. But a Marquess of Newcastle with no army at all, who could cherish no dreams of future triumph, would be merely a figure for derision, utterly ignominious. He could not bear the thought of such a downfall.

Next morning Newcastle sought out the Prince; reiterated his proposal to leave the country; desired his Highness 'would be pleased to give this true and just report of him to his Majesty, that he had behaved himself like an honest man, a gentleman, and a loyal subject'. This request the Prince granted: whereupon the Marquess took his leave, and, escorted by a troop of cavalry and one of dragoons, made his way to Scarborough, whence he took shipping to Hamburg.[1]

The Duchess puts the case in defence of her Lord's conduct in abandoning his country and his sovereign at such a crisis as favourably as it can possibly be put. It was not in his power, she says,

> 'to do his Majesty any further service in that kind; for he had neither ammunition, nor money to raise more forces, to keep York, or any other towns that were yet in his Majesty's devotion, well knowing that those which were left could not hold out long.'[2]

[1] See *Life*, pp. 41-2; *Whitelocke's Memorials*, vol. i, p. 184.
[2] *Life*, pp. 41, 89-94.

In another place she maintains that 'had he stayed, he would have been forced to surrender all towns and garrisons in those parts, that were yet in his Majesty's devotion, as afterwards it also happened'. The wanton destruction at Marston Moor of the army which he had created was the culmination of a whole series of misfortunes, which had conspired to render his good intentions and endeavours ineffective—such as his having had to finance his own operations in the absence of any funds in the royal treasury, the taking from him of thousands of his men when the Queen left Yorkshire for Oxford, the imperative demand that he should return to that county when he was making such splendid progress in the Associated Counties, 'where in all probability he would have made an happy end of the war'; his having had to bear the brunt of the attack of three armies massed against his one; the constant vexation of treachery, falsehood and back-biting on the part of his enemies at Court, who, because he would not swerve from his entire loyalty to the Crown by joining in their selfish intrigues, perpetually cast aspersions upon him, and sought to bring about his destruction. 'Fortune', declares the Duchess, 'hath ever been such an inveterate enemy to him, that she invented all the spite and malice against him that lay in her power.' The Duchess concludes her consideration of her husband's 'misfortunes and obstructions' with the reflection: 'As, according to the old saying, "'Tis easy for men to swim when they are held up by the chin"; so on the other side, it is very dangerous and difficult for them to endeavour it, when they are pulled down by the heels, and beaten upon their heads.'

Newcastle left England because he could not 'endure the laughter of the Court'; but it is obvious that, although he would not actually hear it sound in his ears, his action in quitting the scene of conflict would not allay that laughter, but would actually provoke derision and, what was worse,

reproach. Nor would that reproach be confined to the Court. What of the many thousands of ordinary folk in the north and midlands of England, who had placed their confidence in him as a sure rock of defence? If he was convinced that he no longer had it in his power to help them, nevertheless they were abandoned by the man to whom they had looked as their leader. His abandonment of them seemed explicable only by pettishness or lack of grit. The White Coats had endured to the end; so had not he. Thus, while Rupert 'was mightily condemned for his rashness, the Marquess of Newcastle much more for coming away'.[1] Clarendon discusses the matter with sober and judicial emphasis. He writes:

> 'All that can be said for the Marquis is, that he was so utterly tired with a Condition and Employment so contrary to his Humour, Nature, and Education, that he did not at all consider the means, or the way, that would let him out of it and free him for ever from having more to do with it.'

Again, he argues that 'the strange manner of the Prince's coming, and undeliberated throwing himself, and all the King's hopes, into that suddain and unnecessary Engagement, by which all the force the Marquess had raised, and with so many difficulties preserv'd, was in a moment cast away and destroy'd, so transported him with passion and despair, that he could not compose himself to think of beginning the work again, and involving himself in the same undelightful condition of Life, from which he might now be free.' Clarendon's conclusion is indeed that it was 'a greater wonder, that he sustain'd the vexation and fatigue of the war' so long, than that 'he broke from it with so little circumspection.'[2]

[1] *C.S.P.D.*, *1644*, p. 378. John Constable to his father, Viscount Dunbar, 25 July, 1644.

[2] Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, vol. ii, pp. 507-9.

But let the final comments upon Newcastle's conduct in the Civil War come from those who had the best reason to be aggrieved by his desertion—the King and Queen of England. Henrietta Maria wrote a few months after the tragedy of Marston Moor to assure him of the continuance of her esteem; she would not forget past services because of a subsequent misfortune. 'And therefore believe that I shall always continue to give proof of what I tell you, and let me know wherein I may be useful to you, and you will see how I shall behave, and with what truth I am, Your very good, and affectionate friend.'[1] About the same time King Charles wrote from Oxford a letter in which there is not one word of upbraiding, but which is, on the contrary, full of gratitude for the great sacrifices made by a loyal servant.

'Right trusty and entirely beloved Cousin and Councellor, Wee greete you well. The misfortune of our Forces in the North wee know is resented as sadly by you in the present hazard as the losse of soe considerable a porcion of this our Kingdom deserves: which also affects us the more, because in that losse so great a proporcion fals upon your self, whose loyalty and eminent merit we have ever held, and shall still, in a very high degree of our royall esteeme. And albeit the distracted condition of our Affairs and Kingdom will not afford us meanes at this present to comfort you in your sufferings, yet we shall ever reteyne soe gracious a memory of your merit, as when it shall please God in mercy to restore us to peace, it shal be our principall endeavours to consider how to recompense those who have with soe great an affection and courage as yourself assisted us in the time

[1] Brit. Mus., Harleian MS. 6988, f. 177; *Letters of Henrietta Maria*, p. 261: 20 November, 1644.

of our greatest necessity and troubles. And in the meane time if there be any thing wherein we may expresse the reality of our good intentions to you, or the value we have of your person, we shall most readily doe it upon any occasion that shall be ministered. And so we bid you very heartily farewell.'[1]

That is a letter which does honour both to its writer and to its recipient, and with it one may fittingly conclude the account of the part played by Newcastle as an actor in the Civil War.

But there must be a short epilogue: for if the owner of Welbeck passed from the scene of conflict thus prematurely, Welbeck did not. Lady Jane Cavendish kept garrison there after her father's departure. Very shortly after Marston Moor the Earl of Manchester moved against this important Royalist fortress, at the instance of the Parliament's supporters in Nottingham, 'because it was a great nuisance in those parts'. He decided, Manchester said, to go in person and take a great part of his forces. There was no possibility of resistance against an army when there was no prospect of succour, and so, when the Earl sent a summons to the place, the defenders 'with great civility sent to parley'. Next day, 2 August, 1644, they surrendered the house 'upon composition'. Manchester did not insist upon a surrender at discretion because, as he admits, 'I was not in a condition to besiege a place so well fortified as that was'. He therefore gave the officers and men (of whom there seem to have been about two hundred) liberty to march out with their arms and with their colours flying. But he says that when he took possession of the house most of the soldiers came to him to lay down their arms, their one desire being permission to return to their homes. Thus

[1] Brit. Mus., Harleian MS. 6988, f. 178; Ellis, *Original Letters*, series I, vol. iii, p. 303.

Manchester got possession of three hundred and fifty muskets, eleven pieces of cannon large and small, of which he allowed one to be retained, and other arms, twenty barrels of gunpowder and other stores. The house he preserved entire, and he put a garrison of Nottinghamshire Parliamentarians into it, so that it was held for a time against the King. Newcastle's daughters and others of his family being in the house, Manchester promised to safeguard 'their quiet there', and to intercede with the Parliament for a complete maintenance for them.[1] He reported the arrangements he had made to the Committee of both Kingdoms, and received its complete approval of the terms he had granted.[2]

For just short of a year Welbeck remained in the possession of the Parliament, with Colonel Francis Thornhagh as governor; but on 16 July, 1645, it was recaptured as the result of a surprise attack by a force of cavalry under Sir Richard Willis, sent out from the Royalist army which then held Newark,[3] the last centre of resistance in the final stage of the Civil War after the disastrous battle of Naseby, which had been fought on 14 June, and which was as catastrophic to the King's fortunes in the south of England as Marston Moor had been in the north. Naseby was indeed the most decisive battle of the whole war, and after it the defeat of the remaining scattered Royalist forces about the country was simply a matter of time. The recapture of Welbeck, in these circumstances, could have little military significance, but it was the prelude to one of the most

[1] *C.S.P.D.*, *1644*, pp. 404-5, Earl of Manchester to the Committee of Both Kingdoms, 6 August, 1644.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 426.

[3] See Richard Symonds, *Diary of the Marches of the Royal Army* (Camden Soc., 1859). Symonds says that the defenders tried to pull up the bridge and disputed every yard; but the assailants dismounted and, gaining the bridge before it had been raised, with their pistols forced their way in.

pathetic episodes in the history of the house. Colonel Frescheville—he became Lord Frescheville of Staveley in March, 1665—came from Newark to be governor of the fortress;[1] and here on 15 August came Charles I on his way to join Montrose, as his last hope of salvation, and again on 13 October, when he knew that this last hope was gone. In the meantime further serious reverses had befallen him. Goring, commanding an army in the west, had been crushed at Langport on 10 July; on 11 September Rupert was forced to surrender Bristol; a fortnight later another army suffered defeat at Rowton Heath, just outside Chester, with the King as an onlooker. Thence he made his way to Ludlow, then had to hasten through Shropshire and Derbyshire, and so came into Nottinghamshire and to Welbeck, 'where he refreshed himself and his troops two days'.[2] A harassed, hunted man, he had been witnessing his last hopes dashed to the ground one after another. Only one remained. Ever since Marston Moor Montrose had been achieving a remarkable series of triumphs. The brilliant little successes of Tippermuir and Aberdeen in the autumn of 1644 had been followed by the greater victories of Inverlochy, Auldearn, and Kilsyth in the spring and summer of 1645. Montrose earnestly desired Charles to join him in Scotland, and the King planned to do so, for only there did there seem to be the slightest gleam of hope for him, or even chance of safety. But three days after the defeat of Rowton Heath, David Leslie routed Montrose at Philiphaugh. When he came to Welbeck,[3] Charles was making preparations for an advance towards the Scottish border, to

[1] See A. C. Wood, 'John, Lord Frescheville of Staveley', in *Derbyshire Archaeological and Natural History Society's Journal*, 1932, pp. 58-9.

[2] Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, vol. ii, p. 716.

[3] Richard Symonds (*op. cit.*, p. 227) says that the King after sermon at Welbeck on Sunday, 17 August, made his way to Doncaster.

join Montrose; but the very next day came news that made it necessary to countermand the projected advance. Charles sent some troops to reinforce Montrose (which never reached him), but himself returned to Newark. Twelve years before, when on his way to be solemnly crowned in his northern kingdom, he had been lavishly entertained at Welbeck by his magnificent and ambitious host. His mind must have turned back ruefully to the remembrance of *The King's Entertainment at Welbeck*. Now its owner was in exile, a ruined man; Welbeck was no longer a place of splendour and peace, but simply a military post, which had only just been recovered from the hands of the rebels. And it afforded no safe abiding place. Soon the Parliamentarians were threatening Newark, and on 3 November the King withdrew from the town. There could be no hope of maintaining Royalist strongholds in that neighbourhood any longer. Bolsover and Welbeck were both disgarrisoned by mutual consent of the combatants. The first Civil War was all but over.

Chapter VI

THE FIRST DUKE OF NEWCASTLE IN EXILE

In Clarendon's comments upon Newcastle's reasons for leaving England after Marston Moor, there is at least one remark in which by implication he does the Marquess an injustice. He suggests that among his motives was a desire for ease. But in going into voluntary exile Newcastle was not exchanging the life of the camp for a life of comfort. There could be little comfort abroad for one who had spent his fortune in his efforts for the King. For one used to the highest luxury and the most lavish expenditure, most of the years of exile must have been exceedingly irksome. The only riches he now had at his command were of the kind to which Dryden refers in the Epistle Dedicatory to *The Mock Astrologer*, where he writes: 'Your loyalty made you friends and servants amongst foreigners; and you lived plentifully without a fortune; for you lived on your own desert and reputation. The glorious name of the valiant and faithful Newcastle was a patrimony which could never be exhausted.'[1] Before he set sail from Scarborough the Marquess asked his steward how much money he had left, and found that it was but £90. 'My Lord,' says his biographer, 'not being at all startled at so small a sum, although his present design required much more, was resolved to seek his fortune even with that little.'[2]

[1] *The Works of John Dryden* (18 vols., 1808), vol. iii, p. 212.

[2] *Life*, p. 43.

Newcastle was accompanied on his voyage by his two sons, Charles, Viscount Mansfield, and Henry Cavendish, afterwards second Duke of Newcastle; also by Sir Charles Cavendish, his brother. The rest of the family remained, as we have seen, at Welbeck. Before the party landed at Hamburg—as they did after a passage of four days' duration, on 8 July—Lord Mansfield had fallen a victim to smallpox, and the younger son to a severe attack of measles. Happily both recovered. In Hamburg Newcastle, his brother, and his two sons lived, mostly on credit, until February 1645, when the Marquess decided to take up his residence in Paris, where Queen Henrietta Maria was already established. He therefore sailed to Amsterdam, and then proceeded in leisurely fashion, stopping at Rotterdam, Antwerp, Malines, Brussels, Valenciennes, Cambrai, and Péronne, and not arriving in Paris until April.

Of the events of Newcastle's life in exile we get a much fuller account in his biography than we do of his military career. His biographer had no personal knowledge of his adventures in the Civil War, though no doubt her husband often talked to her about them; but to a large extent she had to rely upon material supplied to her by his secretary, John Rolleston, and on a number of the episodes in which he was concerned in the Civil War more valuable evidence is forthcoming from other sources. But of the years of exile his second wife had intimate knowledge, for she shared them. Shortly after his coming to Paris, Newcastle made the acquaintance of a young, diffident, and very unsophisticated maid of honour at the Court of the English Queen. She was Margaret, the sister of that Sir Charles Lucas, who had latterly commanded the Marquess's cavalry and had fought at Marston Moor. As Margaret Lucas is one of the most remarkable figures in the history of Welbeck, something should be said of her early life before she met with her future husband.

Her father—Thomas Lucas—was, she tells us, 'a Gentleman, which title is grounded and given by Merit, not of Princes'; and though he was not a peer of the realm, 'yet there were few Peers who had much greater Estates, or lived more noble therewith'.[1] Of her home life Margaret has given us a quaint and attractive description in her 'True Relation of my Birth, Breeding, and Life', which forms the eleventh book of *Nature's Pictures drawn by Fancies Pencil*, and of her early experiences as a maid of honour in the adventures of Miss Bashful, one of the characters in her play entitled *The Presence*.[2] She was born at Colchester in 1623 or 1624. Her father died when she was an infant, and she was brought up by her mother, of whom she tells us that she 'was of a grave Behaviour, and had such a Majestic Grandeur, as it were continually hung about her, that it would strike a kind of awe to the beholders, and command respect from the rudest.' This certainly sounds rather forbidding, but the daughter adds finely that

> 'her beauty was beyond the ruin of time, for she had a well favoured loveliness in her face, a pleasing sweetness in her countenance, and a well temper'd complexion, as neither too red, nor too pale, even to her dying hour,

[1] 'A True Relation of my Birth, Breeding, and Life' in *Nature's Pictures drawn by Fancies Pencil to the Life* (1656), pp. 368-91. It is also printed in an appendix to Firth's edition of the *Life*, pp. 149-78.

[2] In *Plays never before Printed* (1668). There are studies of the Duchess by G. Ballard. *Memoirs of British Ladies who have been celebrated for their Writing, or Skill in the Learned Languages, Arts and Science* (1775), pp. 209-14; Horace Walpole, *A Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors* (2 vols., 1759), vol. ii, pp. 12-17, 193-5—very depreciatory: he calls her 'this fertile pedant'; T. Longueville, *The First Duke and Duchess of Newcastle-upon-Tyne* (1910); H. Ten Eyck Perry, *The First Duchess of Newcastle and her Husband as Figures in Literary History* (Harvard Studies in English, vol. iv, 1918). See also an essay by Virginia Woolf in *The Common Reader* (1925).

although in years, and by her dying, one might think, death was enamoured with her, for he imbraced her in a sleep, and so gently, as if he were afraid to hurt her'.

She brought up her family with the utmost care, 'vertuously, Modestly, Civilly, Honourably, and on honest principles'. Their means were more than enough for necessity and decency; they had sufficient for 'delight and pleasure to a superfluity', but they lived orderly and temperately. 'As for our garments,' we are told, 'my Mother did not only delight to see us neat and cleanly, fine and gay, but rich and costly; maintaining us to the height of her Estate, but not beyond it.' The children were brought up tenderly, 'for my Mother naturally did strive to please and delight her children, not to cross or torment them, terrifying them with threats, or lashing them with slavish whips, but instead of threats reason was used to persuade us.' No vulgar serving-men were ever allowed to come into the nursery among the nursemaids, 'lest their rude love-making might do unseemly actions, or speak unhandsome words in the presence of her children, knowing that youth is apt to take infection by ill examples, having not the reason of distinguishing good from bad, neither were we suffered to have any familiaritie with the vulgar servants, or conversation.' On the other hand, the children were expected to 'demean' themselves 'with an humble civillity towards them'. The daughters were taught singing and dancing, as well as reading and writing, but 'rather for formalitie than benefit', since their mother cared less for such accomplishments than for good breeding. Altogether, in her description of her mother the Duchess draws the portrait of a remarkable woman with very clear and well-defined views on education.

The Lucas family was obviously a happy one, for we are told they all had the same agreeable and affectionate

dispositions, and, Margaret tells us, 'I do not know that they did ever fall out, or had any angry or unkind disputes'. On the other hand, they took all their amusements together;

> 'they did seldome make Visits, nor never went abroad with strangers in their Company, but only themselves in a Flock together agreeing so well, that there seemed but one Minde amongst them'.

The sisters, when they married, 'had no familiar conversation or intimate acquaintance with the Families to which each other were linkt to by Marriage'. Brought up in this rather secluded way as she had been, when Margaret left the family circle she found herself exceedingly shy, and not always able to cope with the perplexities found in the rough and tumble of the outer world. She confesses that she was very bashful and self-distrustful when away from her family, partly out of anxiety that they should approve of her actions and behaviour, partly because she felt that, away from parent, brothers and sisters, she 'was like one who had no Foundation to stand, or Guide to direct' her. At the same time, as Mrs. Woolf has put it, 'there was a wild streak in Margaret, a love of finery and extravagance, and fame, which was for ever upsetting the orderly arrangements of nature'.[1] Thus if she was shy, she was also ambitious; if she was happiest in seclusion, she had an impulse to break away from it; if she was diffident, she was also conscious of her powers. These contrasts in her character moulded her destiny.

Hearing that the Queen in her forced retreat at Oxford, when the harsh necessities of the Civil War had banished the royal family from their capital, had fewer maids of honour than she had been wont to have, she was filled with a desire, half romantic, half compassionate, to add to

[1] *The Common Reader*, p. 100.

these reduced numbers by becoming one herself. But once her desire had been gratified, she wished very heartily that it had not been. When she took up her new duties she felt, among so many older and much more experienced women, *gauche* and awkward in the extreme. She observes:

> 'Besides, I had heard that the world was apt to lay aspersions even on the innocent, for which reason I durst neither look up with my eyes, nor speak, nor be in any way sociable, insomuch as I was thought a Natural Fool.'

The trouble was that she was so anxious not to dishonour her family by some indiscreet action, that she preferred to be thought a fool 'than to be thought rude or wanton'. Margaret badly wanted to go home, but her mother very wisely would not allow this, and told her it would be a disgrace for her to return from the Court as soon as she was placed there; so she continued as a maid of honour for nearly two years—first at Oxford, and then at Paris.

All that she tells us of her sufferings in 'A True Relation' is repeated, with perhaps rather more vividness, in *The Presence*. When Miss Bashful first appears at Court, there are exclamations of 'Law, how simply she looks!'—'What a dull eye she has!'—'She hangs down her head as if she were working of cross-stitch!' She is accused of being so stupid as to be unable to put together three words of sense. She is in fact bullied by her companions in the way most likely to hurt an almost morbidly sensitive nature. But Miss Bashful is in fact a good deal cleverer, and has much more personality, than any of her tormentors, and she shews before long an unsuspected capacity to defend herself. She makes a spirited reply to the accusation that she is like a dumb animal. 'I had rather be thought a Fool for saying nothing than be proved a Fool for speaking Non-Sense; and of the two Evils, it were better to be a silent Fool than a prating Fool.' Margaret, in her silence, was

sizing up her companions; all their pettinesses and absurdities were duly noted down in a retentive memory, for nothing escaped her. She kept her own counsel at the time, but years later all her colleagues' foibles were pilloried in her play. These silly maids of honour sing quaveringly, talk loud, cause ridiculous laughter by their buffoonery, talk politics, when they do but reveal their complete ignorance of the subject. Miss Bashful, asked why she chose to come to Court, answers that she came to improve her understanding; and, she adds,

> 'if I can meet no Vertue, Worth, or Honour to take examples from, yet I may observe the Follies, so as to shun them where or whensoever I meet them'.[1]

In April, 1645, there took place the first meeting between Margaret Lucas and the great and splendid nobleman of whom she had already often heard from her brother, the man who had given his all for the King, and who, having lost all, was now an exile. The contrast between his former magnificence and his present poverty made a strong appeal to the essentially romantic nature of the apparently demure and rather dull maid of honour. She may well have been half in love with the mental image she had already formed of the Marquess from the stories she had been told about him before she ever saw him. It is clear that he was immediately attracted by her. People at Court were beyond measure amazed; they were incredulous. What could he possibly see in her? The truth is that they knew little either of Margaret Lucas or of the Marquess of Newcastle. They knew him only as the magnificent lord of Welbeck and Bolsover, and as the leader of the King's armies; they had no conception of the man who communed with Mr. Hobbes, and made chemical experiments with Dr. Payn. So it never occurred to them that there were

[1] *The Presence*, pp. 16, 96-8.

close affinities between the great Marquess and insignificant Miss Lucas, who would be so miserable a match for him that it was not to be believed that he really intended to marry her. But in truth they were very much alike in being both romantics, with a great measure of quite undisciplined intellectual curiosity, much fancifulness, and considerable literary gifts. It is clear that Newcastle speedily perceived that Miss Lucas, despite all appearance to the contrary, had much in common with him.

Margaret insists that there was no passionate love on either side; but the word 'passion' had rather an evil connotation to her, and M. Montégut seems well justified by the tone of her letters to Newcastle in arguing that there was a good deal more passion, at any rate on her side, than she either supposed or admitted. The Marquess was quite blunt, she tells us, as to his purpose in offering matrimony. He

> 'having but two sons, proposed to marry me, a young woman that might prove fruitful to him and increase his posterity by a masculine offspring. Nay, he was so desirous of male issue that I have heard him say he cared not (so God would be pleased to give him many sons) although they came to be persons of the meanest fortunes'.[1]

She adds pathetically: 'But God (it seems) had ordered it otherwise, and frustrated his design by making me barren, which yet did never lessen his love and affection for me.'[2] As for her own feelings towards Newcastle, Margaret declares:

> 'Neither could Title, Wealth, Power or Person entice me to love. But my Love was honest and honourable,

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 220-1. 'Elle connut cet amour amoureux, qu'elle se flattait d'ignorer, comme M. Jourdain faisait de la prose sans le savoir.'

[2] *Life*, p. 45.

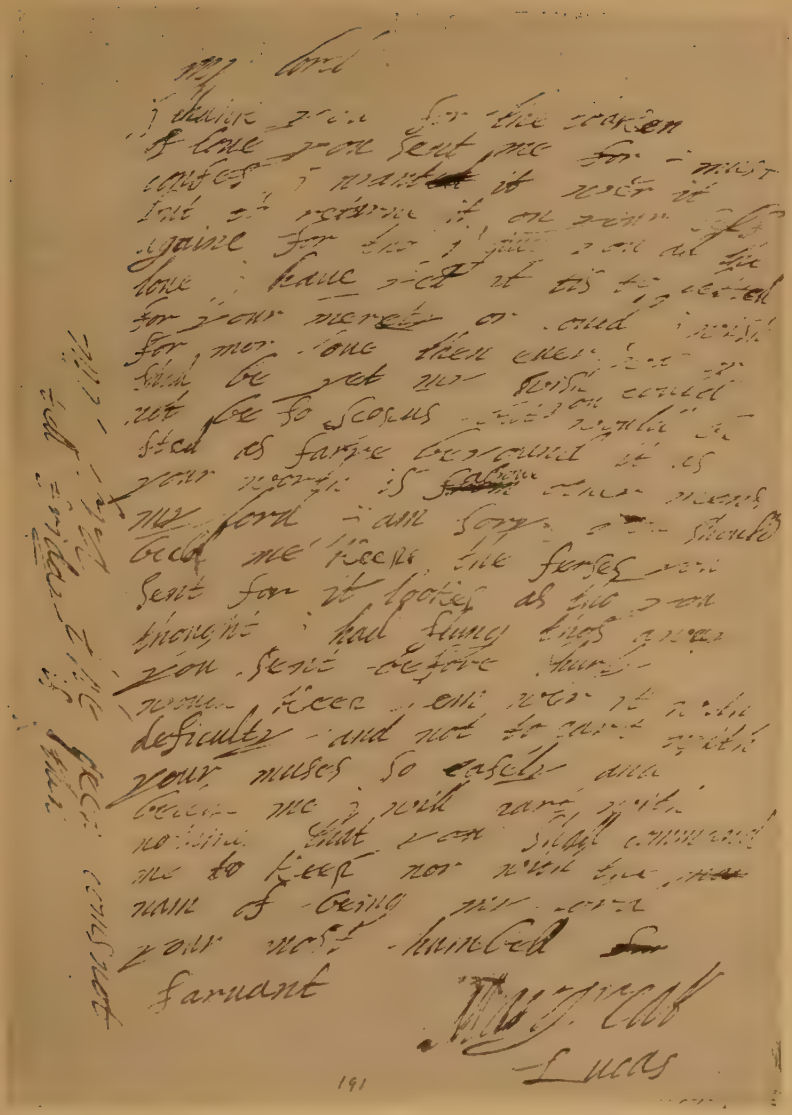
being placed upon Merit, which Affection joy'd at the fame of his Worth, pleas'd with delight in his Wit, proud of the Respects he used to me, and triumphing in the affections he profest for me, which affections he hath confirmed to me by a deed of time, seal'd by constancy, and assigned by an unalterable decree of his promise, which makes me happy in despight of Fortunes frowns.'[1]

The course of true love did not run smooth. Sheer malice and a love of mischief among some of the onlookers were a perpetual torment to Margaret. She was told stories of the inconstancy of her lover by those who were quite sure he would not be constant to her at any rate. Attempts were made by these ill-natured busybodies to untie 'the knot of their affection'. Margaret was accused of making a dead set at the great Marquess. She knew of course that no calumny could be more untrue; but it distressed her none the less. She writes to him in one of her love-letters:

'My lord, if I doe not send to you, pray exques me, for if I doe, they will say I pursue you for your affectshoin, for though I love you extremely well, yet I never fear'd my modesty so small as it would give me leve to court any man.'

The story of the courtship can be traced in a number of letters from Margaret to the Marquess, which have fortunately been preserved. Even in an age which set no great store by uniformity of spelling, her utter inability to spell was remarkable. She was well aware of a failing which, despite her prolific literary productiveness, never improved. It is perhaps unjust to her not to modernise the spelling in these love-letters, for otherwise they tend to give the reader an impression merely of quaintness and

[1] 'A True Relation' in *Nature's Pictures*, p. 375.



Letter of Margaret Lucas to the Marquess of Newcastle, 1645

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even comicality, and he may overlook the authentic note of deep, sincere, and very tender feeling, which is in fact much their most striking characteristic.[1]

The tone of the letters ranges from very grave to mildly gay, but, whatever the mood, they are always attractive. Margaret, ever suspicious of passion, is a little frightened when the Marquess protests the passionate character of his love. She dare not believe that it is as passionate as he says, and she fears that if it be so indeed, it will not last long, 'for no extreme is parmenttary'. He writes her a letter which arrives very early in the morning and she playfully protests:

> 'I think you have a plot against my health in sending so early, for I was forst to read your letter be candell light, for there was not day enough, but I had rather read your letter than slep, and it doth me more good.'

He sends her a portrait of himself together with some verses. She tells him that though the picture 'resembelles' him much, still his verses are more like him than his picture. He sends her another gift, and she writes:

> 'I thank you for the toaken of love you sent me, for I must confes I wanted it, wer it but to retourne it to your selve againe, for tho I give you all the love I have, yet it is to letell for your meret, or could I wish for mor love than ever was or shall be, yet my wish could not be so scopus [copious], but you would be still as farre beyond it as your worth is above other men's.'

Margaret feels a little ashamed of this letter after having written it; it has revealed more intensity of feeling than she considers seemly. It was not that her affection could be too great, 'but I fear I discover it to much in that leter,

[1] The originals of these letters are at Welbeck. They are printed in *Letters written by Charles Lamb's princely woman, Margaret Newcastle*, etc. (ed. R. W. Goulding, Roxburghe Club, 1909), pp. 6-18.

for wemen most love silently'. She had serious misgivings about his offer of marriage to her. She besought him to consider whether marrying her might not bring trouble to him; 'for believe me, I love you to well to wish you unhapy, and I had rather lose all hapness my selfe then you should be unfortunat'. Then she adds: 'But if you be resolved, what day soever you ples to send for me, I will com.'

One of the anxieties of the lovers was with regard to the Queen. For some reason or other they did not at once tell her of their engagement, and they were fearful of her displeasure—afraid that she might not approve of the match in any case; still more so that she would take it ill because she had not been informed. At one time Margaret became ill with apprehension of the Queen's attitude. The news of course leaked out, and the Queen was angry, as they had expected. The Duchess wrote scenes for *The Presence* which she did not incorporate in the play, because even she realised that the play was too long already. But she never sacrificed anything she had ever written, and the superfluous episodes were all printed in the same volume. Two of these are scenes between Miss Bashful and Lord Loyalty, who have their clandestine meetings at Miss Civility's house. Loyalty asks whether she can love an unfortunate man, and Miss Bashful's reply is, Yes, so long as his misfortunes are not the result of his crimes. He retorts that misfortunes are often thought of as crimes, and more often shunned than crimes. Bashful reflects that misfortune and honesty in this age are so closely wedded to one another that they cannot be separated. Can she love him so well as to be ruined for his sake? he asks. If, she answers, he calls poverty ruin when it is the consequence of merit, she will glory in it. In that case, says Loyalty, let them dispute no longer, but get married without delay. Immediately upon this Miss Bashful is summoned to the presence of the Princess in serious disgrace. But the Princess relents in the

play, and the Queen of reality relented also. Newcastle and Margaret Lucas were married in December 1645, in the English Chapel at Sir Richard Browne's house in Paris.[1]

The newly married couple had a rather difficult life to start with, owing to financial embarrassments; being forced to live on credit, or, as Margaret puts it, 'upon the courtesy of those that were pleased to trust them'. Credit could be got, but not maintained indefinitely, so that one day the steward was compelled to inform the Marquess that there was no money for dinner, 'for his creditors were resolved to trust him no longer'; whereupon the Marquess told his wife that she should have to pawn her clothes, so as to procure a dinner. In these straitened circumstances Newcastle sent to Margaret's brother, Lord Lucas, for the small portion of estate which was due to her, and also despatched one of his servants to try to get assistance from friends in England. Little came of the latter attempt, since fear of the triumphant Parliament was too general for people to be willing to succour one whom it had branded as a traitor. In all offers of pardon issued by Parliament since the Civil War began, Newcastle's name had always been specifically excepted, however small the list of exceptions might be. In 1648 he was one of seven who were honoured in this way.[2] There seemed a possibility of rich matches being obtained for the two sons, and they were sent into England in the hope that the family's fortunes might be relieved in this way. However, having returned to their native country, the two young men decided not to marry as yet; but they remained in England, living as best they could. Newcastle would not have been able to leave Paris at all, had it not been for Henrietta Maria, who stood security for his debts, after she had already given him money

[1] *Diary and Correspondence of John Evelyn* (4 vols., 1886-9), vol. ii, p. 25.

[2] Whitelocke's *Memorials*, vol. ii, pp. 434, 438.

amounting to nearly £2,000. There was one easy method of securing relief from his financial troubles which the Marquess resolutely and consistently refused to take—that of endeavouring to make terms with the rebel Government, although had he chosen to do so in the circumstances the royal family itself would have exonerated him from all blame. Thus, the Queen, writing to him shortly after the execution of her husband, on 16 April, 1649, with reference to his resolution, said:

> 'I am sufficiently assured of your affection and fidelity to tell you, that I think the King cannot be displeased that you should do what the late King his father permitted those to do who had served him when he was not in a condition to assist them, not doubting but that when you have an opportunity, you will shew that it was only force that obliged you to do as you have done. And I cannot forbear pitying you, knowing well your repugnance to treat with these abominable villains.'[1]

Later on, Newcastle tried to obtain money from Charles II, and at first his old pupil was disposed to give it; but then some who were not well disposed towards the Marquess prevailed with the King to change his mind. The Duke of Buckingham, who wrote to acquaint Newcastle with this ill news, concluded his letter much as the Queen had concluded hers:

> 'The best cowncell that I am able to give you, considering your owne condition, and the present state of owr affayres, is to make your peace if it bee possible, in Ingland, for certaynly your Lordship's suffering for the King has beene great enoughf to excuse you if you looke a little upon your selfe now, when neither hee is able to assist you, nor you in a possibility of doing him service.'[2]

[1] *Letters of Henrietta Maria*, pp. 359-60.

[2] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, pp. 137-8, 5 Dec. [1650].

But Newcastle, regarded by the Commonwealth Government as one of the worst of all offenders, would not have been allowed to compound even had he wished to do so.

While a great deal of Newcastle's attention during his stay in Paris was necessarily directed to his own affairs, like all the Royalists in exile his thoughts must have constantly turned to the situation in England, which, bad as it had been when he left the country, became so much worse in the following years. Naturally when there were discussions at Henrietta Maria's Court at St. Germain as to future policy, the Marquess was one of those called in to advise, and we hear of his expressing the opinion that the only possible hope lay in Scotland, and of his being rebuked by the Queen for being too blunt in the counsel he gave. Before his father's execution Prince Charles left France for Holland, and the Queen desired Newcastle to follow him. It was now that she contracted for his debts, in order to enable him to leave Paris. He also obtained some £300 or £400 on credit, and, thus fortified, set out upon his journey. His creditors came to see him off, and Margaret was much touched by the warmth of their good wishes and prayers for his welfare: but a creditor's desire for his debtor's long life and prosperity is not necessarily altruistic![1]

When passing through the Spanish Netherlands, Newcastle received a very noble reception at each place in which he stopped for a night or two, especially at Cambrai. From Antwerp he sailed to Rotterdam, and it was from Rotterdam that he visited Prince Charles at The Hague. At this time—early in 1648—the Royalists were optimistic. The King, in Carisbrooke Castle, was carrying on intrigues which resulted in the outbreak of the second Civil War. His supporters abroad entertained hopes of the defection of the English fleet from their allegiance to the Parliament. Royalists rose in Kent and in South Wales, and the Mar-

[1] *Life*, pp. 47-9.

quess of Hamilton led a movement in Scotland. But all the rosy expectations of the Royalists were shattered during the summer by Fairfax's victory at Maidstone; the surrender of Colchester after a heroic resistance—its capitulation being followed by the execution of Sir Charles Lucas as one of its principal defenders; and by the successes of Cromwell in Pembrokeshire and at the battle of Preston. The most important consequence of the Royalist efforts in 1648 was the increased distrust felt for Charles I by Cromwell and other determined Parliamentarian leaders, and their conviction that there could be no peace for England so long as he lived.

For the space of six months, while there seemed a prospect of a great Royalist recovery, Newcastle contrived by means of moneys borrowed from the Marquess of Hertford and the Earl of Devonshire to keep 'an open and noble table for all comers', and was 'pleased especially to entertain such as were excellent soldiers and noted commanders of war . . . still hoping that some occasion would happen to invite those worthy persons into England to serve his Majesty'.[1] But when it became apparent that every expectation of success had been shattered, he decided to retire into a purely private life once more, and this time settled down in Antwerp in a house belonging to the widow of 'a famous picture drawer' (as the Duchess describes him), Rubens. He had spent a great deal more than the £200 he had contrived to borrow, as the result of the 'free and noble' living in which he had indulged during his sojourn in Rotterdam, and he was once more 'much necessitated for money'. It seems probable that for the remainder of his years of exile Newcastle lived as frugally as it was in his nature to do; but it is quite clear that the financial difficulties which he faced during his life on the Continent were largely due to the fact that, used as he had been to a

[1] *Life*, p. 49.

princely magnificence, he must needs endeavour to maintain the sort of state which he regarded as suitable to his dignity. He was congenitally incapable of real thrift. He could contemplate with philosophical, and indeed cheerful, equanimity the prospect of having no dinner; but, once having obtained money or credit, he would speedily use every penny of it, whereas a man used to the practice of economy would have been able to husband his resources with comparative ease and comfort.

At length it was decided that some serious steps must be taken to mend the Marquess's fortunes. It is true that things were made as easy as possible for him in Antwerp, whose inhabitants his wife commends as 'the civilest and best-behaved people that ever I saw', and, in common with other English exiles who took up their residence there, he was freed from all taxes and excise duties, as well as being credited 'for all manner of provisions and necessaries for his subsistence'.[1] The reason of this resolution being taken was the situation of Sir Charles Cavendish, who found that, if he did not return to England and compound for his estates, they would be sold outright. Newcastle had been unwilling to make any terms for his, as we have seen; the Commonwealth had laid hands upon them, and one finds it compensating some of its own adherents for their losses out of the Marquess's property.[2] But now Newcastle did his best to persuade his younger brother to save what he could of his own lands before it was too late, and, aided by Hyde, who lent his arguments to the same purpose, he at length succeeded in inducing Charles to adopt a course against which the latter had been as strongly opposed as the elder brother. He feared that if he went to England he might be imprisoned, but even more that before he was allowed to compound he might be compelled to take the

[1] *Life*, pp. 51, 61; *Clarendon State Papers*, vol. iii, p. 154.

[2] Whitelocke's *Memorials*, vol. iii, pp. 45-6.

Covenant. It was decided that Lady Newcastle should accompany Sir Charles into England, and see what could be done to collect some more ready money.[1]

Margaret's admiration for her fellow traveller in this enterprise was unbounded. Indeed, everyone who came into contact with Charles Cavendish seems to have been immensely impressed by the greatness of mind and charm of character which was contained within his puny and misshapen body. In her fragment of autobiography she pays tribute to him in a really noble and impressive passage.

> 'I will build his Monument of truth, though I cannot of Marble, and hang my tears as Scutchions on his Tombe. He was nobly generous, wisely valliant, naturally civill, honestly kind, truly loving, vertuously temperate, his promise was like a fixt decree, his words were destiny, his life was holy, his disposition milde, his behaviour courteous, his discourse pleasing, he had a ready wit and a spacious knowledge, a settled judgement, a clear understanding, a rationell insight, he was learned in all Arts and Sciences, but especially in the Mathematicks, in which study he spent most part of his time; and though his tongue preacht not Morall Phylosophy, yet his life taught it, indeed he was such a person, that he might have been a Pattern for all Mankind to take.'[2]

[1] *Life*, pp. 55-6; *Clarendon State Papers*, vol. iii, p. 34; *Life of Edward, Earl of Clarendon*, by himself (3 vols., Oxford, 1827), vol. i, pp. 294-5.

[2] *Nature's Pictures drawn by Fancies Pencil*, p. 378. Clarendon (*Life*, vol. i, p. 292) delineates his character with greater art and even greater eloquence and with the same obvious sincerity. He speaks of Cavendish as 'one of the most extraordinary persons of that age, in all the noble endowments of the mind. He had all the disadvantages imaginable in his person. . . . But in his unhandsome, or homely habitation, there was a mind and soul lodged that was very lovely, and beautiful, cultivated and polished by all knowledge and wisdom, that arts, and sciences could supply it with.' He speaks also of his bravery: he 'charged the enemy in all battles, with as keen a

Lady Newcastle and her brother-in-law had very little funds when they set out on their journey; indeed hardly sufficient to take them to London. They stopped in Southwark, and here Sir Charles had to pawn his watch in order to pay their night's lodging. When they reached London, Margaret, through the mediation of her brother, Lord Lucas, put forward a claim (dated 10 December, 1651) to some subsistence for herself out of her husband's estate, as the Commonwealth Government were prepared to consider such applications. But she met with refusal. In her biography of her husband, she tells us it was because the Marquess was the greatest traitor of England; but in her 'True Relation' of her own life she gives the real, or at any rate the technical, reason, which was that as her marriage had taken place after Newcastle became a delinquent, she was not entitled to anything. Indignantly she declares that no beggar was ever so badly used, and she speaks of the hearts of the Puritan rulers of the country being 'as hard as my fortunes, and their natures as cruel as my miseries'.[1] Thus Lady Newcastle's efforts on behalf of herself and her husband were entirely fruitless.

Sir Charles Cavendish was more successful, though the process of arranging a composition for his estates was very lengthy. After he had agreed to the sum of £4,500, an additional £500[2] was demanded, and he had to sell some of

courage, as could dwell in the heart of man'. His modesty was equally great. It was difficult to induce him 'to enlarge himself on subjects he understood better than other men, except he were pressed by his very familiar friends; as if he thought it presumption to know more than handsome men could do'. He was the soul of honour: 'No temptation could work upon him to consent to anything, that swerved in the least degree from the pacific rules of honour, or the most severe rules of conscience.'

[1] *Life*, p. 56; *Nature's Pictures drawn by Fancies Pencil*, pp. 379-80; *Calendar of the Proceedings of the Committee for Compounding*, p. 1733.

[2] *Life*, pp. 57-8.

his lands at a loss in order to raise the necessary money. He tried to do something on his brother's behalf as well as his own. Finding that all the Marquess's estates were now on the point of being sold outright, he endeavoured to save at all events Bolsover and Welbeck,[1] and he was prepared to part with more of the land for which he had just compounded for this purpose. But when he at last found the necessary funds, Bolsover had already passed into the hands of a private individual. Parliament was resolved that a place naturally so formidable, on account of its position, should no longer be convertible into a regular fortress, and the intention of the new owner was to pull down the house and to sell the materials. The process of demolition had already begun when it was stayed by Sir Charles succeeding in buying Bolsover back again, but at an inflated price. During the prolonged course of negotiation regarding Newcastle's and his younger brother's estates, both the Marchioness and her brother-in-law had very little indeed to live on, and it was not until 15 January, 1652, that the Committee for Compounding allowed Sir Charles to receive rents from his lands. Hereafter an income was assured him. But ere this Newcastle, left behind at Antwerp, had fallen into a still worse plight. Not a halfpenny of ready money had been obtained for him as the result of his wife's and his brother's mission, and at last his creditors entirely lost patience. He wrote to the Marchioness to let her know that if speedy relief were not forthcoming he must infallibly starve. But the creditors relented, for the Marquess sent for them and addressed them with such effective eloquence that, instead of demanding the immediate payment of his debts, they promised to do everything that they could to assist him, and showered upon him all

[1] See *Calendar of the Committee for Compounding*, pp. 1732-7. The Commonwealth Government raised £111,593 10s. 11d. from Newcastle's estates at five and a half years' purchase.

manner of provisions. Sir Charles had at last procured the sum of £200 on credit, which he immediately despatched to Antwerp,[1] so, what with the improvement in his affairs which he owed to his own compelling rhetoric, and what with his brother's hard-won money, Newcastle was once again out of the ditch.

But shortly afterwards he fell ill, and on the rumour of this Margaret decided that she could no longer remain in England, and must hasten back to her lord. His distemper does not appear to have been very serious; in returning to Antwerp, she left behind her the brother who really needed her care. For Charles Cavendish fell ill of an ague, and died on 4 February, 1654,[2] before he had received any benefit to speak of from the compositions which he had made with much repugnance and with such difficulty. When the Marchioness arrived in Antwerp her husband's creditors all rushed to the conclusion that she brought money-bags with her, and that they would be paid to the full immediately. Once again Newcastle had to explain to the creditors that there was no money, and to ask renewal of their confidence for an indefinite period. Yet again they gave it. The Marchioness extolled their 'charity and compassion', and one may well be disposed to agree with her. As she puts it,

> 'Certainly it was a work of Divine Providence, that they shewed so much love, respect and honour to my Lord, a stranger to their nation; and notwithstanding his ruined condition, and the small appearance of recovering his own, credited him wheresoever he lived both in France, Holland, Brabant, and Germany; that although my Lord was banished his native country, and dispossessed from his own estate, could nevertheless live in so much splendour and grandeur as he did.'[3]

[1] *Life*, p. 57.
[2] He was buried at Bolsover.
[3] *Life*, p. 59.

How did Newcastle occupy his time during his years in Antwerp? To some extent with politics. On 12 January, 1650, Charles II made him a Knight of the Garter—the investiture did not take place until 15 April, 1661—and shortly afterwards he was admitted to the Privy Council.[1] The King was then at Breda, in negotiation with the Estates of Scotland. When the advice of the Council was asked, Newcastle urged that Charles's best policy was to come to an agreement with the Scots, and to go to Scotland in person in order to raise an army there. This advice the King took; but the new Royalist effort ended in the rout of Worcester. Afterwards Newcastle took but little part in public affairs. The dominating influence at Court was Hyde's, and Hyde did not entertain a high opinion of the Marquess's abilities or of his wisdom.[2]

Newcastle's most constant interest during his exile was in his horses. Even in the penurious Paris days he had contrived to buy two Barbary horses so that he might, as his chief recreation, exercise the art of the riding school. These two horses died: but in Antwerp they were replaced by two others, and by degrees Newcastle was able to add another six. However much he might be in distress for lack of funds, he would not part with one of them, holding, as he did, that the value of a good horse was beyond money —as the Duke of Guise and others who sought to make a purchase from him discovered. To one such gentleman the Marquess stated that the price of a horse for which he said he was prepared to give a good price was £1,000 to-day, would be double that to-morrow, three times as much the day after, and so forth. Newcastle's chief hobby was the management of horses. The word hobby is indeed much too weak, for it was a ruling passion. What appealed to him

[1] *Clarendon State Papers*, vol. ii, p. 53.

[2] Newcastle and Hyde were not always on the best of terms. See *Clarendon State Papers*, vol. i, p. 341; vol. iii, pp. 44, 51, 53.

One of the Duke of Newcastle's managed horses, showing the West Front of Welbeck Abbey
from a painting attributed to A. Van Diepenbeke

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most of all was that trick riding, which nowadays is almost entirely relegated to the circus,[1] but which in the seventeenth century was the accomplishment of the fine gentleman; and in this art Newcastle, who had been an expert and daring horseman at the age of ten—this art of voltoes, curvets, balotades—became a past master, and the greatest of authorities upon its theory and technique. His success was due to his great love of horses and understanding of them. His wife assures us that they had 'a particular regard for her Lord', seeming to rejoice whenever he entered the stables, and to perform their acrobatic feats better when he was by, and with most pleasure and pride when he himself was the rider.[2]

Newcastle established a regular riding-school or *manège* in Antwerp during his residence in the city, which became one of its chief sights and attractions, so that every distinguished visitor came to see the school, and, if they were lucky, to see the Marquess himself and his master of the horse, Captain Mazin, perform their equestrian feats. Among those who visited the riding-school was Charles II, who not only watched its owner ride in it, but rode in it himself. When Don John of Austria became governor of the Netherlands, nearly the whole of his retinue, filling some seventeen coaches, came to the school. The Marquess on this occasion pleased his Spanish guests by telling them that his favourite horses were Spanish—Barbs were the gentlemen, but Spanish the princes, among breeds. Don John did not personally visit the *manège*, but his successor, the Duke of Caracena, did, and on this occasion Newcastle was induced himself to ride, although he had recently been

[1] This trick riding was retained in the Spanish Riding-School at Vienna until the break-up of the empire; and what remains of the imperial stud is still the property of the State. Some horses were brought over from it to Olympia in 1936, and performed the evolutions which were once dear to Newcastle's heart.

[2] *Life*, pp. 46-7, 51-3.

ill and felt he could hardly sit in the saddle. However, mounted successively on two beautiful Spanish bays, he performed such startling feats of horsemanship that some of the Spaniards crossed themselves and cried 'Miraculo!'[1]

Newcastle was certainly vain of his accomplishments as a rider. He goes so far as to say,

> 'There is no Horseman but shall make my Horses go for his Use, either in a Single Combat, or in the Wars better than he shall anybodies Horses else; and that's sufficient: for, to make them go in Perfection as I can were too much, and too great a Miracle.'

He very reasonably defended the amount of time and energy which he devoted to his riding-school. In his preface to his second book on horsemanship he argues,

> 'It is true that if there was nothing commendable but what is Useful, strictly examined, we must have nothing but Hollow Trees for our Houses, fig-leaf Breeches for our Clothes, Acorns for our Meat and Water for our Drink; for certainly most things else are but superfluities and curiosities.'[2]

The French regarded the art of horsemanship as peculiarly their own, but even they had to admit Newcastle's pre-eminence: at any rate he not only quotes one as designating him the finest rider in England, but another as remarking that he would be a bold man who mounted a horse in the Marquess's presence.[3]

[1] *Life*, pp. 60-2.

[2] *A New Method and Extraordinary Invention to Dress Horses* (1667).

[3] From the same preface. Of Newcastle as a horseman Ben Jonson wrote:

> When first, my Lord, I saw you mount your horse,
> Provoke his mettle and command his force
> To all the uses of the field and race,
> Methought I read the ancient art of Thrace,

'Newcastle, c'est la force de ton génie
Qui te fait triompher de la Cavalerie'
Méthode . . . nouvelle de Dresser les Chevaux, Antwerp, 1657

Resolved to impress an even larger audience than could be crowded into the riding-school at Antwerp, and to hand down the results of his experience to posterity, Newcastle wrote and published while at Antwerp what for long remained the classical treatise on horsemanship. The book was written in English, but translated into French before publication. By the generosity of two English friends, the author was enabled to produce a most sumptuous folio, adorned with forty-two plates made from designs by Diepenbeke, in which, now with Bolsover as a background, now with Welbeck, the Marquess or his assistant, Captain Mazin, was represented carrying out the most dexterous feats. There are also one or two remarkable symbolical pictures representing the apotheosis of the author as the chief lord of the equestrian world. The book was published in 1658, with the title *La Méthode et Invention Nouvelle de Dresser les Chevaux*.[1] After his return to England—in 1667—the Duke published a second work, in English, with the title, *A New Method and Extraordinary Inven-*

> And saw a Centaur past those tales of Greece,
> So seem'd your horse and you both of a piece!
> You showed like Perseus upon Pegasus,
> Or Castor mounted on his Cyllarus,
> Or what we hear our home-born legend tell,
> Of bold Sir Bevis and his Arundel;
> Nay, so your seat his beauties did endorse,
> As I began to wish myself a horse;
> And surely, had I but your stable seen
> Before, I think my wish absolv'd had been,
> For never saw I yet the Muses dwell
> Nor any of their household half so well,
> So well, as when I saw the floor and room,
> I look'd for Hercules to be the groom;
> And cried, Away with the Caesarian bread!
> At these immortal mangers Virgil fed.
>
> *Underwoods*, lxxii, *Works of Jonson* (ed. Gifford), vol. iii, p. 331.

[1] The original manuscript is preserved at Welbeck. For a further notice of this work and its successor see *infra*, p. 171.

tion to Dress Horses, and Work them, according to Nature; as also to perfect Nature by the Subtlety of Art; which was never found out but by the thrice noble, high, and puissant Prince, William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle.

While the art and science of horsemanship and horse management absorbed a large measure of his time and thoughts during his exile, his other interests—philosophy, poetry, music—were not neglected. Many savants enjoyed his hospitality, including Hobbes, Descartes, and Gassendi, and we read of his giving a ball in 1658, attended by Charles II, the royal brothers, the Dukes of York and Gloucester, and their sister, the Princess Royal, at which not only was there banqueting and dancing, but also the declaiming of poems which the Marquess had composed specially for the occasion, and the singing of his songs.[1] So, as his wife said, he had 'happiness in his miseries'. One of the miseries was the news of the death of his eldest son, Viscount Mansfield, in June, 1659, when he was but thirty-two years old. He had married the eldest daughter and heiress of Richard Rogers, by whom he had had a daughter, who died soon after birth. Towards the end of the long period of exile Newcastle's mind seems to have turned much to his two houses, Bolsover and Welbeck, which had been preserved for him at so high a price. We find him writing in October 1659, urging his now only son to leave the dovecote where he at present resides, and to live at Welbeck. He was much exercised in mind about furniture, pictures, and hangings belonging to both houses, which were to be sold in order to pay some of his debts in England; distressed that belongings which had been collected by his ancestors should be lost in a moment. If he (the new Lord Mansfield) would arrange to redeem them, the Marquess

[1] *Life*, p. 63; *C.S.P.D., 1657-8*, pp. 296, 311. The Duchess gives details of a discussion in Paris between her husband and Hobbes on the subjects of levitation and witchcraft. *Life*, pp. 106-8.

'Il monte avec la main les éperons, et gaule
Le Cheval de pégase qui volle en Capriole'
Méthode . . . nouvelle de Dresser les Chevaux, Antwerp, 1657

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and his lady were prepared to hand over all interest in them to him wholly and totally. In another letter he said that if ever he saw his son again he would make Welbeck a fine place once more. He might not be such a good architect as his father was, but he did not despair.[1]

At the time when he wrote these letters to his son—the autumn of 1659—there was at last good reason to hope for better things. As early as the previous May, the posture of affairs in England had been such that he had written, in a letter to Secretary Nicholas, 'Great confusions and alterations is daily looked for, and I hope to God it will produce excellent things for the King'.[2] Richard Cromwell, conscious that he was incompetent to hold the Protectorate in succession to his father, and unable to stand up against Lambert, Fleetwood, and the other Army leaders, quietly resigned that month; in the following August formidable Royalist risings took place, notably in Lancashire and Cheshire—these were suppressed, but the Republican government did not gain new stability in consequence. In November General Monck crossed the Tweed, and on 3 February, 1660, his forces entered London. On 25 April a new Parliament met, in which the Independents formed a small minority, Presbyterians and Cavaliers having been returned in great strength. Sagaciously advised by Hyde, Charles II acted with great circumspection at this critical time, never jeopardising his chances by false move or premature action. On 9 April he had issued his very judicious *Declaration of Breda*, and, its terms having been regarded as eminently satisfactory by his new supporters, he was on 8 May proclaimed King. On hearing the good news, Newcastle hurried to The Hague to join his sovereign. He was so impatient to return to England that he was content to sail in 'an old rotten frigate that was lost the voyage

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 143.

[2] Brit. Mus., Egerton MSS., printed in Firth's ed. of *Life*, 208.

after'. Its unseaworthiness was so patently obvious, even to landlubbers, that when some of those who intended to accompany the Marquess set eyes on it, they turned back, refusing to endanger their lives in such a vessel. But Newcastle 'was so transported with the joy of returning to his native country' that he gave not a thought to the method of his transportation. Fortunately the weather in the North Sea was very calm, so that even the rottenest ship could be in no danger. There was the disadvantage that, there being hardly any wind, the passage from Rotterdam to London occupied six days and six nights. But the high spirits of Newcastle were proof even against this delay, and 'he pleased himself with mirth' on the tedious voyage. At last, when the smoke of London became visible, 'he desired one that was near him, to jog and awake him out of his dream, for surely, said he, I have been sixteen years asleep, and am not thoroughly awake yet'. On landing, he stayed the night at Greenwich. Never did a supper taste so savoury, 'and the noise of some scraping fiddles he thought the pleasantest harmony that ever he had heard'.[1]

[1] *Life*, pp. 65-6.

Chapter VII

THE FIRST DUKE OF NEWCASTLE IN RETIREMENT

The Marchioness of Newcastle did not take part in her husband's joyous home-coming. When he left Antwerp for The Hague there was still a large number of his debts unpaid. In these circumstances the Marquess hit upon the rather strange device of leaving his wife behind as security, and also, since his own departure had been too hasty to allow of his taking formal leave of the chief functionaries of the city which had befriended him so long and treated him with such remarkable generosity, that she might render thanks to them on his behalf before she set out for England. The Marquess had difficulty in borrowing the money necessary to redeem his Margaret out of pawn, and when he was able to send a sum which he imagined to be adequate, it proved to be too little by £400, so that she had to do some borrowing herself.[1]

When she arrived in London she found her lord in lodgings in Aldgate which she regarded as unfit for one of his rank and quality. One suspects that in her case the pleasure of the return to England was not unalloyed, that she had expected to find the Marquess received with enthusiasm at Court, immediately recompensed by a grateful monarch for all his losses and self-sacrifice, and given high office in the state. Newcastle had found no such welcome. A restoration is never the entirely rosy experience which

[1] *Life*, pp. 66-8.

those who have yearned and worked for it have pictured in their heightened imagining; it is never a complete return to the past which they knew and loved and expected to resuscitate. The Marquess belonged to a generation which found small honour or influence when Charles II mounted his throne—a generation older even than that of Clarendon, whose star, in the ascendant for a short time after the Restoration, was to sink so suddenly and completely with new and more scintillating luminaries rising in the political heavens.[1] So, although when his resentful Lady urged him to leave London for the country, he told her to have patience, and moved into Dorset House, as if his purpose was to settle down in the capital, nevertheless, much sooner than she had expected, he informed her that he had finished his business, and the order was given for waggons to transport all their goods and chattels to Welbeck.

There is no doubt that Newcastle himself was greatly disappointed. The King and his advisers seemed much more intent upon rewarding the recent services of those who, like Monck and Sandwich, had up till very recently been numbered in the ranks of the enemy, than upon remembering the sacrifices of those whose loyalty had never wavered. Finding that he could expect no other boon, the Marquess craved of his sovereign simply that he might be permitted to retire into the country, to repair if possible 'his confused, entangled, and almost ruined estate'. He is reported to have said to the King that he was aware that many believed him discontented, and that they would probably ascribe his retirement simply to dissatisfaction. But he protested that his joy at his Majesty's restoration overwhelmed any anxiety about himself. Whatever in the

[1] When the Earl of Bristol in a speech in the House of Lords drew a comparison between the services of the Marquess of Newcastle and those of the Duke of Buckingham, the latter was so incensed that a duel would have resulted had it not been for the King's intervention.

future the King might command him to do, were it to sacrifice his life—he would obediently perform it.[1] His devotion to the royal family could not be diminished by lack of reward for his constancy. Margaret tells us that she more than once heard her husband say that his love towards his gracious master, King Charles II, was above the love he bore his wife, his children, and posterity; and when, on his return to England, she remarked that his gracious master did not seem to love him equally well, he replied that 'he cared not whether his Majesty loved him again or not; for he was resolved to love him'.[2] It is true that in March, 1665, Newcastle's great services to the house of Stuart were recognized by the conferment of a dukedom, but the grant was not spontaneous; it was readily granted, but only after a request for it had been made.[3]

It is manifest that the treatment he received after the Restoration rankled. The theme of the monstrous sin of ingratitude recurs over and over again in Margaret's works. One of her *Orations of Divers Sorts* (the XIth) is entitled 'An Oration against those that lay an Aspersion upon the Retirement of Noblemen'. She observes that, both in past ages and in her own day, 'meritorious persons, for their noble actions, most commonly get envy and reproach, instead of praise and reward'; but beyond all other ages the present abounded in spleen and malice, so that more praise was lavished on the wicked than the good, the coward than the valiant, the traitor than the loyal servant, 'which makes wise men meddle as little with the affairs of the world as ever they can'.[4] How keenly the Newcastles felt on this subject can perhaps best be realized from the vividness and vitality of an admirable scene in *The*

[1] *Life*, pp. 68-9. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 135.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 96; *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 145. The date of the patent is 16 March, 1664/5.

[4] *Life*, p. 145.

Sociable Companions, representing discarded soldiers who, after fighting for their country, see no prospect before them but to leave its ungrateful shores, and to seek their fortune in one of the new plantations.[1]

There was certainly much to be said in favour of a life of retirement on its own merits, for the task of repairing the material damage done to the Duke's estates was big enough without the distraction of Court engagements. Welbeck and Bolsover were both in a deplorable condition. Some of the furnishings had been preserved by his eldest daughter, now Lady Jane Cheyne, and these would have been lost altogether had they not been bought back by his second son, as we have already seen. It was at Bolsover that the greatest damage had been done, for, apart from the demolitions begun by the private purchaser, the Commonwealth Government, in order to save the expense and trouble of garrisoning the house, had already destroyed turrets and outer walls.[2] Of eight parks which Newcastle had possessed, Welbeck was the only one that had not been ruined. Here again the benefactor had been Sir Charles Cavendish. In the other parks the trees, the deer, the game, had almost entirely gone. The greatest destruction had been in the Duke's favourite park—Clipstone—where not a tree was left standing. It had before the Civil War been abundantly stocked with deer, hares, partridges, pheasants, waterfowl, and had given splendid opportunities for hunting, coursing, hawking, and fishing. When Newcastle saw all the wanton devastation, he could find no words to express his outraged feelings. Just as his parks had been denuded of their contents, so his houses had been stripped of furniture, pictures, plate, linen, and personal belongings.

The Duchess makes an elaborate computation of the extent of the losses which her husband sustained as the re-

[1] *Plays never before Printed*, by the Duchess of Newcastle (1661).
[2] *C.S.P.D., 1649-50*, pp. 204, 217-18.

sult of the Civil War. It will be found at the end of the second Book of her biography.[1] Such a calculation is obviously difficult to make, and her rather rough and ready methods may not be approved. But the exactness of her figures did not so very much matter in her own day, and still less matters now. Broadly speaking, her conclusion is that the sheer loss and damage to property amounted to some £200,000; and that, reckoning the annual value of the rents of her Lord's estates in Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Gloucestershire, Somersetshire, Yorkshire and Northumberland as £22,393 10s. 1d., and the period during which he was deprived of them as eighteen years (i.e. the time spent on service in the Civil War and in exile), the total loss in rent was over £400,000. The gross figure she arrives at is £941,303. That represents a gigantic figure in modern currency.

To the work of reconstruction Newcastle addressed himself with courage and perseverance, although he was much hampered by the Act of Oblivion and Indemnity, and the expense of the lawsuits which his efforts necessarily involved. On the other hand, in September, 1660, a private Act of Parliament was passed restoring to him all his honours, manors, lands and tenements. This could not extend to lands which Newcastle had himself sold, and to recover all that had been lost was beyond hoping for; but he achieved his purpose in large measure, and he actually added to his property by purchasing the Castle of Nottingham. It had been in a semi-ruinous condition even before the Civil War began, and by the time of the Restoration there was little of it left standing; 'yet, it being a seat which had pleased his father very much, he would not leave it since it was offered to be sold'. He purchased it from the Duke of Buckingham, and commenced rebuilding it in 1674, apparently with the intention of making it one

[1] *Life*, pp. 69-81.

of the finest residences in the country, and setting aside the income of several of his estates for the purpose.[1]

The task of reconstruction absorbed most of Newcastle's time and attention after his return to England. He and his wife were seldom seen abroad, save for an occasional visit to London. Newcastle had been created Chief-Justice in Eyre north of Trent after the Restoration, so that he had certain public duties to perform.[2] It is pleasant to note instances of the rare magnanimity which his wife claims for him.[3] He bore no malice to individuals who had been members of the Puritan party. Colonel Hutchinson was suspected of complicity in the Yorkshire Plot of 1663. A party of horse carried the Colonel before the Marquess, as he still was then, who, says Mrs. Hutchinson, 'treated him very honourably'. Instead of dealing with the prisoner magisterially, he conversed openly with him, shewing him the letter he had received from the Duke of Buckingham instructing him to arrest Hutchinson and others. The Colonel wanted to learn who his accusers were. That, said the Marquess, was more than he knew. He went further than that; told Hutchinson he was personally satisfied that he was entirely innocent, and sent him back to his own house, without any guard at all, merely requiring him to

[1] Thoroton, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 22.

[2] The office of Justice in Eyre was created by Henry II in 1184. In 1238 the Royal Forests were divided into two provinces, north and south of the Trent respectively, each under a Chief-Justice in Eyre, whose court was commonly known as the Court of Justice Seat. The special forest laws, already becoming obsolete in the seventeenth century, were revived by Charles I, and this court functioned vigorously under Lord Holland between 1632 and 1637. After the Revolution of 1689 the forest laws, as Blackstone put it, fell 'into total disuse, to the great advantage of the public'; but the office of Chief-Justice in Eyre was not abolished until 1817. See Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, book III, ch. vi; W. Holdsworth, *History of English Law*, vol. i, pp. 94-107.

[3] 'He loves all that are his friends, and hates none that are his enemies,' *Life*, p. 109.

remain at home for the space of a week till he should have given an account of himself to the Privy Council.[1] With similar generosity Newcastle stood by another of those arrested on suspicion at this time—John Cromwell—and procured his release.[2]

During Newcastle's life after the Restoration, Welbeck gave frequent hospitality to authors, and especially playwrights, for he continued to be a patron of literature and the arts. He loved the society and conversation of men of learning and of wit. The dramatist Shadwell bears witness in the dedication of his play, *The Libertine*, to the excellence of Newcastle's own powers as a talker. Both he and the Duchess mention the quickness of his repartee.[3] His zeal for horse-breeding and horse-management remained unabated, though he gave up actually riding his horses while they performed his favourite evolutions in the Welbeck riding-house. This was clearly at his wife's request. Both in her biography and in an amusing passage in her strange Utopia, *The Blazing World*, she expresses her great solicitude at finding the Duke become ever-heated after such violent exercise.[4] She had no belief in athleticism of any kind, and it must have been a great relief to her when her husband was content to instruct his grooms in the feats which he had been wont to perform himself.[5]

[1] *Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson*, p. 347.

[2] Editor's note to *Life*, p. 109. [3] See *Life*, p. 111.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 112; *The Description of a New Blazing World* (1666), p. 110.

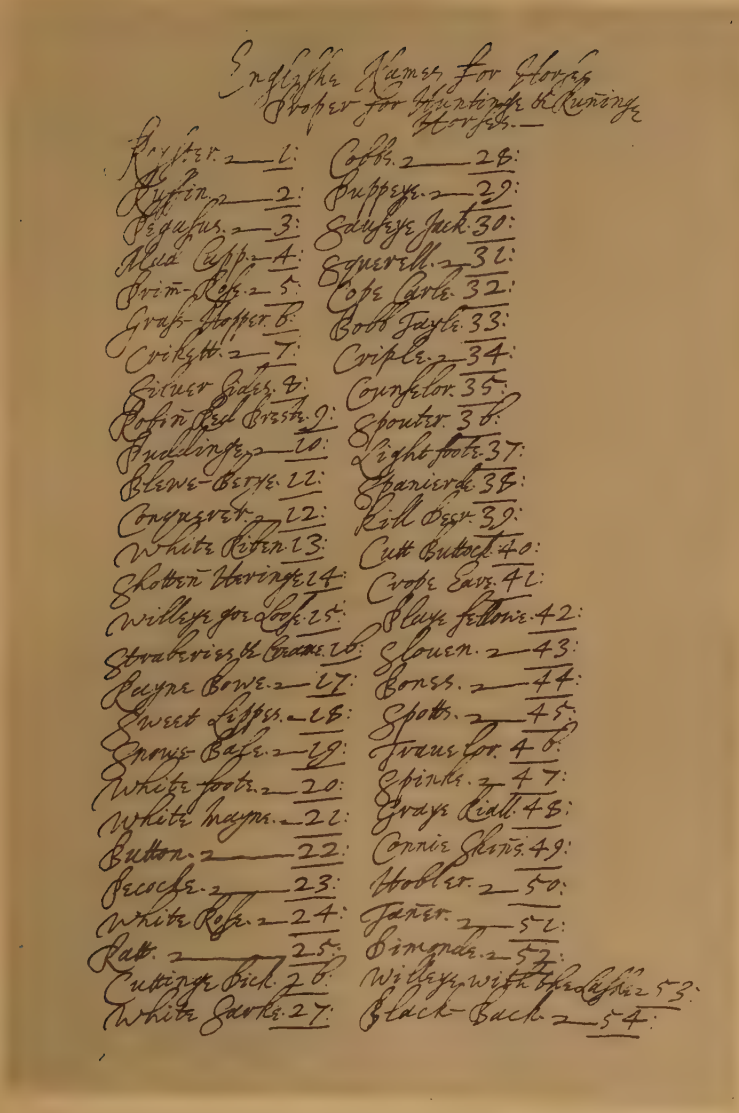
[5] For example, in *The World's Olio* (1671), p. 130, she says that swimming is not useful for a gentleman. It is useful only in time of danger, 'and a man runs greater hazards in the gaining that Art than the Advantage he is like to get by it'. Similarly of tennis (*Sociable Letters*, CI), 'Tennis is too violent a motion for wholesome exercise, for those that Play much at Tennis impair their Health and Strength and wasting their vital spirits through much sweating, and weaken their Nerves by overstraining them. Neither can Tennis be a Pastime, for it is too Laborious for Pastime, which is onely a Recreation, and there can be no Recreation in sweaty Labour.'

Newcastle's devotion to horses found another expression in his making a race-course five miles in length near Welbeck, and devising rules for it himself.

He proposed to hold meetings six times a year, on the last day of each month from April to September, and to give a cup of £5 value. The races were to be run in three lengths, or 'heats', and the rider who won the most 'heats' would win the cup. The stakes were to be ten shillings a horse, the winner of the cup saving his own stake. One of the rules was, 'that if any rider whip another rider, or his horse on the face, or pull back another's bridle, he shall lose the cup'. Another, that 'no bystander must ride in with the horses, to face, stop, or turn them over, or any way to hinder them, but must ride aloof from them'. An appeal was made to the gentry to help in punishing offenders. Newcastle expressed the hope that, as he was constructing the course for the pleasure of the gentry, they would take it in good part, since he had no other motive except his own contentment. He knew that no public thing but was found fault with: yet he was confident that there would be nothing of this humour amongst those noble persons whom herein he desired to serve. As for the rules he had framed, he desired it to be known 'that though this be not the Law of the Medes and Persians, yet he will alter nothing in it'. Anyone was free at these races to put in his horse or not as he chose: if he did so, he must abide by the rules. If anyone did not like them he was free to set up his own race-course and concoct his own rules.[1]

If, despite his vicissitudes of fortune, Newcastle lived to the advanced age of eighty-three, this must partly be ascribed to the constant exercise he had been accustomed to take all his life, and was still taking at the age of seventy-three, when the Duchess's biography was written, and

[1] Copies at Welbeck and in the Bodleian; printed in appendix to Firth's edition of the *Life*, pp. 218-19.



List of names for horses, in the hand-writing of the 1st Duke of Newcastle

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also to his temperate manner of life. His wife describes him as maintaining an absolute regularity of diet—taking a glass of sack with a little bread for his breakfast, two glasses of small beer, and a glass of sack with his dinner, and, for his supper, only an egg and a draught of small-beer.[1] These and a good many other domestic details the Duchess provides for us in her friendly and confidential manner—so that it is easy enough to picture the sort of life the Duke was living at Welbeck in his seventy-fourth year.

While he was occupied with the business of his estates, or in his riding-house, or 'in music, poetry, architecture or the like', the Duchess was everlastingly writing, pouring out one portentous folio after another with amazing rapidity, even when one remembers that the writing of books became almost her sole occupation. As she informs us, with the complete and naïve frankness which was one of her most engaging qualities, she was not of an active disposition—she did not care for travelling or for visiting, or for dancing or for cards. She considered dancing a graceful art for unmarried people, but unbecoming the gravity of the married state. She was not one to enliven a social gathering; she was too dull for revelling, she said, and as for feasting, that agreed neither with her humour nor her constitution, and her diet was very sparing, such as a little boiled chicken, while her drink was usually water. She was, she admitted, inclined rather to melancholy than to mirth—though her melancholy was not crabbed or perverse, but only contemplative. Ever since childhood she had been addicted rather to meditation than to society, to the use of the pen rather than of the needle. She realised that she ought not to keep herself entirely from the sight of the world, and so she made a point of going abroad, though not to visit people, only to look out silently upon mankind, to

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 112-13.

'bring new materialls for my thoughts and fancies to build upon'.[1] A less healthy life than that which the Duchess lived at Welbeck it would be difficult, according to our modern canons, to conceive. She had an absolute minimum of fresh air and exercise. Indeed she took no exercise at all;

> 'onely walking a slow pace in my chamber, whilest my thoughts run apace in my brain, so that the motion of my minde hinders the active exercises of my body: for should I Dance or Run, or Walk apace, I should Dance my Thoughts out of Measure, Run my Fancies out of Breath, and Tread out the Feet of my Numbers'.

It does not need modern notions of hygiene to realise that so completely sedentary a life as Margaret Cavendish's was most unhealthy. Newcastle's own physician wrote to him to point this out, and to say, 'If she will be a philosopher, I could wish her to be a peripatetick.'[2] But the Duke in an easy-going way was content to allow the Duchess to follow her own bent, to write as many books as she liked, and to do as little else as she felt inclined.

Once Margaret on her own initiative made a heroic and quite hopeless attempt to master some other accomplishments. She found her neighbours accusing her waiting-maids of idleness. The maids excused themselves on the ground that their mistress gave them nothing to do. She was smitten with a pang of conscience, realising that they were certainly quite willing to carry out her orders, and that it was quite true that she seldom gave them any. She ordered spinning wheels and flax to be bought, so that the girls and she might sit and spin together. But her housekeeper smiled at this idea. Nature, said she to the Duchess, had made her Grace a spinster of poetry, but of nothing

[1] *Nature's Pictures*, pp. 304-7.

[2] *Letters written by Charles Lamb's princely woman, Margaret Newcastle*, etc., p. 4.

else; she would rather spoil flax than get cloth by her spinning, which was an art that called for practice. The Duchess thereupon thought again, and decided that she would make silk flowers. The house-keeper again had a strong argument to bring against this suggestion: neither the Duchess nor her maids would be able to make silk flowers as well or as cheaply as those whose trade it was to make them for sale in the shops; what would be the point of making them then? It was the same when the Duchess proposed to preserve fruit. The house-keeper observed that, as her Grace neither ate sweets herself nor gave opportunities for others to eat them, they simply were not wanted.[1] So the lazy house-keeper and the lazy waiting-maids returned to their laziness, and the Duchess, having salved her conscience, with the smallest possible regret returned to her inveterate pastime of making books.

The contemplative mind of the Duchess of Newcastle was never at rest. She was always speculating about the fundamental mysteries of God and the universe, or about women's gifts and limitations, or about politics, and wars and the causes of them, or about the art and practice of medicine, or about the rightness of the use of cosmetics, or about the duties of wives to their husbands, or about the genius of Shakespeare, or about the moon and the tides, and the reason why there are waves in the sea, or about the ancient Britons, or about madness, or about the fairies, or about the habits of birds and fishes. She was constantly forming ideas, or fancies, about all these important subjects and many, many more, and often a great many different ideas about the same thing at different times. These notions of hers were infinitely precious to her; she could not bear the thought of losing a single one of them. The awkward thing was that they might come to her, and often did so, at the most inconvenient times—not only

[1] *CCXI Sociable Letters*, Letter CL.

when she was slowly pacing her chamber, deliberately ruminating upon these exciting, and enormously important, problems; but also in the middle of the night, when she was in her bed, so that there was the awful danger that, awakened out of her dream by the conception of one of these ideas, she might fall asleep again without its being recorded, and next morning find she had forgotten it. She therefore had to have amanuenses constantly within reach to write at her dictation by night as well as by day, ready at her summons to appear instantly at her bedside, so as to avoid the dread possibility that she might conceive and not bring forth.

Such being her mode of life, the Duchess of Newcastle was bound to be eccentric; and the longer she was permitted to indulge in it, the more eccentric she became. Moreover, she deliberately cultivated singularity. With her the greatest of all intellectual virtues was to be original; she seems even to go so far as to believe that any idea that is entirely your own is more valuable than one which is derived from someone else, however high his authority. Apart from the occupation of writing, the Duchess had one other interest which may be described as a hobby, namely, the designing of her own dresses and head-dresses. She at all times took a keen interest in the subject of clothes, but her own must be absolutely distinctive, and the more extraordinary the better. She tells us in her 'True Relation',

> 'I took great delight in attiring, fine dressing and fashion, especially such fashions as I did invent my self, not taking that pleasure in such fashions as was invented by others: also I did dislike any should follow my Fashions, for I always took delight in a singularity, even in acoutrements of habits.'[1]

[1] *Nature's Pictures*, p. 387. Grammont describes the dress of a lady at a ball at Whitehall. 'She must have at least sixty ells of gauze and silver tissue about her, not to mention a sort of pyramid upon her

Eccentric enough in manner and behaviour, Margaret deliberately made herself odd also in appearance by the studied strangeness of her costume. Although she did not often emerge from her retreat at Welbeck, she soon became a notorious person. She might be bashful and uncomfortable in public, but her desire for fame was inordinate, and if she was retiring in society, she was far from reticent in print. If she had few friends, and saw little of her relatives, she took all her readers into her confidence, and revealed to them, not only her most intimate thoughts on every subject that interested her, but the most detailed facts about her domestic habits and arrangements. No writer was ever less impersonal, for she never took an objective view of anything: she was interested less in examining the thing itself than in her own reactions to it.

Thus the Duchess became a well-known character. If few conscientiously plodded through her portentous disquisitions on natural and moral philosophy, and even fewer through her prolix dramas, yet the general public had, from one source or another, gleaned some impression of her eccentricity. Thus on her infrequent visits to London there was little privacy for the Duchess of Newcastle; thousands rushed to have a look at the strange curiosity. We hear a good deal of a visit of the Duke and Duchess to London in April and May, 1667, from both Evelyn and Pepys. Evelyn went to pay his respects to them at their house in Clerkenwell, where they lived in great state. 'They received me with great kindness', he writes, 'and I was much pleased with the extraordinary fanciful habit, garb, and discourse of the Duchess.' He paid two subse-

head, adorned with a hundred thousand baubles.' 'I bet', says the King, 'it is the Duchess of Newcastle.' It was not, only a parody of her; but the point of the story is the same. *Memoirs of Count de Grammont*, by Count Anthony Hamilton (1911 ed.), p. 154.

quent visits. He says of the latter occasion, when he took his wife with him, that the Duchess 'received her in a kind of transport, suitable to her extravagant humour and dress, which was very singular'.[1] Pepys was not a visitor, only a sight-seer, but as usual a very determined one. On 11 April he made for Whitehall in the expectation of seeing the Duchess arrive on a visit to the Queen that evening. He went in vain, for she did not go to Court that day. Pepys notes of her:

> 'The whole story of this lady is a romance, and all that she does is romantick. . . . There is as much expectation of her coming to Court, that so people may come to see her, as if she were the Queen of Sweden.'[2]

On 21 April the Duchess did appear at Whitehall in great splendour, herself in one coach drawn by six horses, with her gentleman in another coach, and her women in a third. Five days later Pepys, who had by this time caught sight of her, records:

> 'All the town talk is now-a-days of her extravagancies, with her velvet cap, her hair about her ears; many black patches because of pimples about her mouth; naked-necked, without anything about it, and a black just-au-corps.'

He adds, 'She seemed to me a very comely woman.'[3] On May Day there was a great crowd in the Park, drawn there by the desire to catch a glimpse of the Duchess; and indeed there was such a concourse, and she was followed by so many vehicles, that all Pepys saw was her black coach

[1] *Evelyn's Diary*, vol. ii, pp. 25-6.

[2] *Pepys' Diary* (ed. Wheatley, 8 vols., 1924), vol. vi, p. 254. The reference is to Queen Christina.

[3] *Diary*, vol. vi, p. 274.

adorned with silver decorations and silver curtains. Ten days later he again saw the coach, with a hundred boys and girls in chase after it.[1]

On 30 May the Duchess paid a visit of great pomp to the Royal Society, being formally received by the President, the mace being carried before him. Both Pepys and Evelyn were among the members present. This time the former's impression was by no means favourable. He notes in his Diary:

> 'The Duchess hath been a good, comely woman; but her dress is so antick, and her deportment so ordinary, that I do not like her at all, nor did I hear her say anything that was worth hearing but that she was full of admiration, all admiration.'

Several experiments were performed for her benefit. Air was weighed, water was made to bubble up in a rarefying apparatus by drawing out the air, and an empty bladder was made to swell by the same contrivance; but the sight which pleased Pepys best was the turning of a piece of roasted mutton into pure blood, 'which was very rare'.[2]

As time went on the appellation 'mad Madge of Newcastle' came to be applied to the Duchess. It is not good for anyone to live a life so much cut off from ordinary humanity as was hers; to have for company chiefly her own thoughts, which, as she grew older, became more and more involved and fantastical. Happily for herself she had a husband, devoted and kind, but no recluse and endowed with the grace which nature had denied to her—a sense of humour. Thus while he had so many interests in common

[1] *Pepys' Diary*, vol. vi, pp. 282, 295.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 324; *Evelyn's Diary*, vol. ii, p. 26; T. Birch, *History of the Royal Society* (4 vols., 1756-7), vol. ii, p. 178.

with her, and was always willing good-humouredly to write occasional scenes and verses for her ponderous volumes, he never took himself or her with the intense seriousness with which she took herself. There is a story that once, when someone complimented him on his wife's wisdom, he ejaculated, 'Sir, a wise woman is a very foolish thing!' It might have been well had the Duke placed more restraint upon her foibles than he did: but he who had in his younger days undertaken to mould the character, principles, and opinions of his future sovereign, does not appear to have attempted to moderate the peculiarities of his second wife. The example of Charles II was not perhaps encouraging to similar efforts, and in any case the older people grow the less confident they usually become of their power to alter the natures or the lives of other people, even of those closest to them. But there is no reason to suppose that the Duke ever felt any inclination to repress Margaret's singularities. They were akin in their essential, inveterate romanticism, an entirely devoted couple, and their life at Welbeck, from 1660 till the Duchess's death at the age of fifty on 15 December, 1673, was a very happy one.[1] The Duke survived his wife for almost exactly three years, dying on 25 December, 1676.

A massive monument in the north transept of Westminster Abbey, of white marble with black marble pillars, records her virtues. It was erected by the Duke in his own lifetime, and he is simply designated as 'the Loyall Duke of Newcastle'. Of her it records:

> 'The Dutchess was a Wise, Wittie, and Learned Lady, which her many Books do testifie; she was a most

[1] Horace Walpole (*Royal and Noble Authors*, vol. ii, pp. 13-14), very unkindly and maliciously puts it: 'What a picture of retired nobility was this stately poetic couple, retired to their own little domain and intoxicating one another with circumstantial flattery on what was of consequence to no mortal but themselves!'

Virtuous and Loving and Carefull Wife and was with her Lord all the time of his banishment and miseries and when he came home never parted from him in his solitary retirement.'[1]

[1] Compare the eulogy in Ballard's *Memoirs of British Ladies*, p. 213: 'Her person was very graceful; her temper naturally reserved and shy; and she seldom said much in company, especially among strangers: Was most indefatigable in her studies, contemplation, and writings: Was truly pious, charitable and generous: Was an excellent Oeconomist, very kind to her Servants, and a perfect pattern of conjugal love and duty.'

Chapter VIII

THE FIRST DUKE OF NEWCASTLE AS PATRON AND MAN OF LETTERS

A history of Welbeck Abbey may not be an appropriate place for literary criticism; but, on the other hand, any description of the first Duke and Duchess of Newcastle which omitted all consideration of their place in literary history would be manifestly incomplete and lop-sided.[1] Welbeck during their lifetime was of importance in English literature as well as in English history, and a brief survey of their literary accomplishments seems therefore to be an essential adjunct to the annals of the house.

Gerard Langbaine in his *Account of the English Dramatic Poets*, first published in 1691, says of the Duke: 'No Person since the Time of Augustus better understood Dramatick Poetry, nor more generously encourag'd Poets; so that we may call him our English Mæcenas.'[2] Newcastle had a genuine love of the society of men of learning and men of letters, and he became a patron, not simply because it was the mode in his day for members of the nobility to give their countenance to poets and playwrights, but because he was genuinely interested in their craft, which in the manner of an amateur he practised himself. The word patronage has acquired an unfortunate connotation, and it is apt

[1] The best commentary on the Duke's literary work is that by H. Ten Eyck Perry, alluded to *supra*, p. 118.

[2] Ed. 1691, Oxford, p. 386.

to be associated with the idea of the insufferable condescension of an intellectual inferior to an intellectual superior. Aristocratic patronage of literature has gained a bad name with a good many people, mainly because Samuel Johnson wrote a bludgeoning letter to the Earl of Chesterfield. But the artist and the man of letters have to make a living, if they are to continue to do their work; and before the development of a new sort of patron, also not necessarily the intellectual superior of his beneficiaries—the general reader, the man who was most conspicuously able to supply the material needs of authorship was the nobleman. Happily that type of literary patron existed, and Newcastle was a conspicuously fine example of it.

That he would have been very glad to make Welbeck a home for Thomas Hobbes we have already seen. As a young man he was a friend also to Ben Jonson, who, in 1619 or 1620, composed an interlude in celebration of the christening of William Cavendish's eldest son, which takes the form of a conversation between the dry-nurse, the wet-nurse, and the mid-wife, while an astrologer comes in to prophesy good luck for the boy, and to say flattering things about the father. In *Underwoods* Jonson celebrated not only Newcastle's skill as a horseman but also his dexterity as a fencer.[1] When poet and patron first met, the former was enjoying prosperity; but latterly he fell on evil days, and in 1631 he petitioned Newcastle to succour him in his present state of necessity.[2] As we have already seen, Newcastle employed Jonson to compose the masques with which he entertained the royal parties of 1633 and 1634.

[1] As, for example, the following rather rough lines:

> To know the heads of danger, where 'tis fit
> To bend, to break, provoke, or suffer it;
> All this my Lord, is valour, this is yours,
> And was your father's, all your ancestors'!

Underwoods, lxxxix, *Works of Jonson* (1892 ed.), vol. iii, p. 344.

[2] From Brit. Mus., Harleian MSS., quoted in Perry, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

Jonson acknowledged the payment made for the second of the two masques as a 'timely gratuity' which came upon him as 'the dew of heaven'.[1]

One of Jonson's most notable pupils, Richard Brome, the author of *The Northern Lasse; The City Witt, or the Woman wears the Breeches; A Joviall Crew, or The Merry Beggars*, and a number of other comedies which were very popular in their day, and at their best of considerable merit as delineations of low life, dedicated one of them, *The Sparagus Garden*, which was produced in 1635, to Newcastle. Another minor dramatist of the same period, Robert Davenport, dedicated a volume of poems in manuscripts to him.[2]

Two other plays written during the reign of Charles I were dedicated to Newcastle—Ford's *The Chronicle Historie of Perkin Warbeck* and Shirley's *The Traitor*. Newcastle befriended the latter both before and during the Civil War, and invited him to try his fortune with him in the campaign.[3] The poet apostrophised his benefactor thus:

> Hail, great preserver of the King,
> And your own honour! Such a thing
> At Court but rare appears;
> And when in calmer years
> So much virtue, so much crime
> Shall be read both at one time,
> Treason shall want a child, and your worth known,
> Posterity shall thank the Kingdom's groan.[4]

Another poet accompanied Newcastle in the wars, as we have already seen, Davenant.

[1] See Perry, p. 94. Newcastle addressed a short poem to Jonson's memory with the title 'Ben Jonson's Ghost'. See *Welbeck Miscellany*, No. ii, *A Collection of Poems by Several Hands* (ed. F. Needham).

[2] See Perry, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-19; *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. vi, p. 227. The Davenport MS. is in the library at Welbeck.

[3] Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses* (ed. Bliss), vol. iii, p. 737.

[4] *Shirley's Dramatic Works* (16 vols., 1833), vol. vi, p. 435.

After the Restoration the Duke's connections with the authors of the time were still closer. In 1668 Dryden prefixed his play *An Evening's Love, or, The Mock Astrologer* with a magniloquently worded address to the Duke, in which he acknowledged his great obligation to his Grace.[1] Shadwell, the far from contemptible dramatist whom Dryden pilloried in *Mac Flecknoe*, dedicated several of his plays to the Duke, and one of them, *The Humorists*, to the Duchess.[2] In his preface to that very entertaining comedy *Epsom Wells* he, like Langbaine, refers to Newcastle as 'the only Mæcenas of our Age'; adding, 'I am sure, the only one I can boast of.' He goes on to describe him as one who 'still preserves and maintains the Magnificence and Grandeur of our ancient Nobility'. Being 'truly great in Mind as well as Fortune', the Duke, he says, delights in rewarding and encouraging art and wit. He not only encourages poetry by his own practice of it; he protects it. '*Welbeck* is indeed the only Place, where the best Poets can find a good Reception.'[3] In the dedication of *The Libertine* he again alludes to the hospitality of Welbeck,

> 'where (when I arrived) I found a Respect so extremely above the meanness of my Condition, that I still received it with blushes; having nothing to recommend me (but the Birth and Education, without the Fortune, of a Gentleman) besides some Writings of mine, which your Grace was pleased to like'.[4]

[1] See *supra*, p. 116.

[2] See *The Complete Works of Thomas Shadwell* (ed. M. Summers, 5 vols., 1927), vol. i, p. 7. Dedication of *The Sullen Lovers*; pp. 181-2 of *The Humorists*; vol. ii, pp. 102-3 of *Epsom Wells*; vol. iii, p. 19 of *The Libertine*; p. 101 of *The Virtuoso*. The dedicatory MS. to *The Sullen Lovers* is in the library at Welbeck, inscribed 'For his Grace the Duke of Newcastle'. Shadwell also wrote *An Elegy upon the death of the incomparable Princess, Margaret, Dutchess of Newcastle*, vol. v, pp. 235-7.

[3] *Works of Shadwell*, vol. ii, pp. 102-3.

[4] *Ibid.*, vol. iii, p. 20.

In *The Virtuoso* Shadwell assures the Duke in rather fulsome language that all the actions of his life shall be dedicated to his service, and that his Grace's generosity, kindness, and bounty have made him 'wholly your Creature'.[1] Dryden's satire, *Mac Flecknoe*, has just been mentioned. The unfortunate hero of that work, to whom so severe a drubbing was administered, the Irishman, Richard Flecknoe, was another of Newcastle's literary *protégés*, who highly belauded the hospitality of Welbeck and the benevolence of its lord, who

> 'Does appear a hundred times more great
> By his neglect of't, than by keeping state,
> He knows Civility and Curtesie,
> Are chiefest signs of true Nobility;
> And that which gains them truest honourers,
> Is their own Vertues, not their Ancesters.'[2]

Flecknoe dedicated his pastoral tragi-comedy *Love's Kingdom* to the Duke, *A Farrago of several Pieces* to the Duchess, and his *Demoiselle à la Mode* to them both.[3]

To our ears the tone of the dedications which authors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were wont to address to their patrons appears fulsome and sycophantic; but we have to bear in mind the more deferential mode of address customary during the period, not only as between *protégé* and benefactor, but in every kind of correspondence, and also the more turgid style then current. At all events Newcastle was not responsible for the terms in which those whom he befriended chose to couch both their solicitations for his favours and their expressions of gratitude; they are clear evidence of the amount of help which he afforded to authorship. On the other hand, it has to be remembered that the obligations were not all one-sided—Newcastle as a free-lance writer owed a good deal to the

[1] *Works of Shadwell*, vol. iii, p. 101. [2] *Epigrams* (1670), p. 34.
[3] See Perry, *op. cit.*, pp. 141-4.

expert help, advice, and collaboration of his professional brethren, and particularly of Shadwell.

Highly exaggerated encomiums were expressed upon the Duke's own works in his own day. His wife, with a proud and simple-minded assurance, writes, 'I may justly call him the best lyric and dramatic poet of this age'.[1] Shadwell in terms of hyperbole described him as 'the greatest Master of Wit, the most exact Observer of Mankind, and the most accurate judge of Humour, that ever I knew'.[2] Shadwell's encomiums may be ascribed to pure toadying; but Langbaine, who had no favours either to crave or to acknowledge, and who was not always an indulgent critic, while ascribing the merit largely to Ben Jonson as the Duke's instructor in the art, yet speaks of Newcastle's 'perfect knowledge of what was to be accounted True Humour in Comedy'.[3]

Newcastle wrote several plays and a quantity of light verse, a good deal of which is to be found dispersed among his plays. The Duchess claims that his comedies shew

> 'his great observation and judgment, for they are composed of these three ingredients, viz. wit, humour, and satire; for his chief design in them is to divulge and laugh at the follies of mankind: to persecute vice, and to encourage virtue.'[4]

The plays certainly possess some amount of vigour, and the low comedy scenes, in which beggars, vagabonds, or serving men and serving maids below-stairs make their appearance, are invariably brisk and lifelike. It may safely be

[1] *Life*, pp. 108-9.

[2] Dedication to *The Virtuoso* in *Works*, vol. iii, p. 101.

[3] Langbaine, p. 386.

[4] *Life*, p. 109. In contrast to these eulogies is Horace Walpole's mordant comment that Newcastle was 'fitter to break Pegasus for a manage, than to mount him on the steps of Parnassus'—*Royal and Noble Authors*, vol. ii, p. 12.

said that almost the only episodes in the Duchess's plays which have any real dramatic quality and movement are of this character, all of them being contributed by her husband. He had some genuine dramatic talent; he could conceive a plot which had verve and coherence; he could produce occasional scenes characterised by spontaneous wit and spirited action. But the writing of a good play calls for much more than this. A genius may be a law unto himself, but Newcastle was not a dramatic genius, and from ordinary men there is demanded a considerable amount of labour and concentration, and a sense of form. The Duke did not possess these qualifications. Play-writing with him was simply a recreation and he never had any intention of toiling at it; that would obviously have spoilt the fun. It is for this reason that Newcastle's plays were not unaided efforts. The professional was called in to make a unified whole of the Duke's somewhat disconnected scenes, to brush them up generally, to give added point and strength to both action and dialogue, to undertake the tiresome and fatiguing process of recasting and revision, in which the noble author had no desire to indulge, and so to fit them for publication and production upon the stage. It has generally been thought that two of his plays, *The Variety* and *The Humorous Lovers*, were his entirely unaided work, but there now seems reason to think that Shadwell may have collaborated in the latter.[1]

The first, perhaps the best, and certainly the most successful of Newcastle's four comedies was *The Country Captain*, which seems to have been written before the outbreak of the Civil War, and perhaps as early as 1636. Here it seems plain that he had James Shirley as his collaborator —the play being substantially the same as an anonymous work entitled *Captain Underwit*, which the late Mr. A. H.

[1] See prefatory note by F. Needham to *Welbeck Miscellany*, No. i (1933).

Bullen on internal evidence had no hesitation in ascribing to Shirley, while we have the contemporary testimony of Anthony Wood to the assistance given by Shirley to his patron in the composing of his dramatic work.[1] The play was originally performed at Blackfriars before the Civil War,[2] and it was several times revived after the Restoration, which sufficiently indicates that it found some favour with the play-going public, though that inveterate frequenter of the theatre, Pepys, did not care for it at all. He saw it on 26 October, 1661, and called it 'so silly a play as in all my life I ever saw, and the first that ever I was weary of in my life'.[3] He went to see it twice again despite this very unfavourable comment, but the first impression was confirmed: it was 'a very dull play'.[4]

The second of Newcastle's comedies, belonging to the same period as *The Country Captain* and called *The Variety*, is the one for which no suggestion has ever been put forward that it was not all his own work. It is very inferior to the other; it has no plot at all and indeed little to recommend it, so that it has been described as 'this wretched production'.[5]

The first of the Duke's post-Restoration plays, *The Humorous Lovers*, was published in 1677, but was put upon the stage long before that, since Pepys saw it at the Duke of York's theatre on 30 March, 1667. He appears

[1] On the general question of the relationship between *The Country Captain* and *Captain Underwit*, and Shirley's part in the writing of the play, see A. H. Bullen, *A Collection of Old English Plays* (4 vols., 1882), vol. ii, p. 315; Edmund Gosse's introduction to Shirley's Plays (Mermaid Series), p. xxv; Firth's edition of the Duchess's *Life of Newcastle*, pp. xvii-xviii; Perry, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-12.

[2] On the question of date, see Perry, pp. 108-10.

[3] *Diary*, vol. ii, p. 118.

[4] *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 134; vol. iii, p. 15. The last occasion was on 14 May, 1668.

[5] See Perry, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-18.

to have been under the impression that it was written by the Duchess, not the Duke, of Newcastle. He condemns it out and out as 'the most silly thing that ever came upon a stage. I was sick to see it, but yet would not but have seen it, that I might the better understand her'.[1] In another entry in his Diary he repeats his censure. It was 'the most ridiculous thing that ever was wrote.' But he tells us that the Duke and his wife were 'mightily pleased with it', and that at the end of the performance she 'made her respects to the players from her box'.[2]

The Triumphant Widow, or the Medley of Humours, was printed in the same year as *The Humorous Lovers*, but is a later production. Langbaine says of it, 'This was thought so excellent a Play by our present Laureat that he has transcrib'd a great part of it in his *Bury-Fair*.' Langbaine evidently thought that Newcastle was the sole author of the work; indeed he expresses his confidence that it was his, and that Shadwell simply borrowed the plums.[3] But, as one authority has expressed it, 'It is difficult to resist the conclusion that he (Shadwell) was the real author of this portion of the *Triumphant Widow*, and that he was only reclaiming his own property.' This view is borne out by a comparison with the manuscript of the Duke of Newcastle's play, *A Pleasante Merrye Humor off a Roge*, which is entirely his own handiwork, and which formed the basis of *The Triumphant Widow*.[4] The latter is a really amusing comedy, in which the fun is provided, not only by the main plot, the relations between the Lady Haughty and her numerous suitors, but also by the sub-plot and the

[1] *Diary*, vol. iv, p. 233.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 254, 11 April, 1667.

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 387.

[4] *Welbeck Miscellany*, No. i (1933). See the prefatory note by F. Needham, in which the parallel passages in the *Roge* and the *Triumphant Widow* are set side by side.

plausible rogue, Footpad.[1] The main plot may be entirely Shadwell's work; the sub-plot is Newcastle's. If it be concluded that Shadwell was responsible for the main plot, the Duke must nevertheless be given full credit for much of the success of the play, for it has no livelier scenes than those which depict the intrigues of the servants' hall, which we may safely ascribe to him, if only because they bear so strong a family resemblance to similar scenes which he supplied in the Duchess's plays, notably *The Lady Contemplation.*

In addition to the four comedies thus far mentioned, Newcastle had some small part in the writing of *Sir Martin Mar-all; or The Feign'd Innocence*, which did not appear under Dryden's name until 1697. It was published anonymously, but entered at Stationer's Hall as written by the Duke of Newcastle, and when it was originally acted it appeared as a play by him. Pepys describes it as 'a play made by my Lord Duke of Newcastle, but as everybody says, corrected by Dryden'. With this comedy Pepys was enormously pleased. He saw it at least eight times, and possibly more, and his delight in it was quite unimpaired however often he saw it; indeed the more he saw it, the more he liked it. When he first witnessed it he described it as 'the most entire piece of mirth'. He said he never laughed so much in his life; his head ached all night as the result. In the last reference to it in the Diary he declares it to be 'the best comedy ever was wrote'. Thus Pepys ascribed to the Duke of Newcastle's authorship both the dullest and also the best comedy he had ever seen. Had Pepys been right in supposing Newcastle the principal author of *Sir Martin Mar-all*, the Duke would have enjoyed, and deserved to enjoy, a much higher reputation as a dramatist than posterity has awarded him. But possibly the sole share of the Duke in Dryden's comedy was that he translated Molière's

[1] See Perry, *op. cit.*, pp. 156-61.

L'Étourdi and suggested the plot as a good one for Dryden's use, in which case, as the affinity between *L'Étourdi* and the theme of *Sir Martin Mar-all* is not very great, Newcastle's share in the latter is reduced almost to vanishing-point.[1]

The Duke's poems have similar virtues and defects to those of his plays.[2] He could be vivacious, sparkling, and humorous, and occasional single verses or even stanzas are really distinguished. But he was too careless, too indifferent to form and to the strict requirements of prosody to achieve any sustained success. He could write graceful love songs, such as 'Thine eyes to me like sunnes appeare' and 'I conjure thee, I conjure thee, by thy skin that is so faire', both in *The Variety*. In more robust style is the pedlar's song in *The Triumphant Widow* in which the list of the vendor's wares goes very trippingly, and there is another song in the same play, 'I dote, I dote, but am a sot to show't', which is so vigorous and so excellent in every way that, if it really is the Duke's own work, it shows that he had his inspired moments. The balance of probability is against his having written it;[3] on the other hand, good as it is, it is no

[1] See Perry, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-1; Allardyce Nicoll, *History of Restoration Drama, 1660-1700* (Cambridge, 1923), pp. 172-3, and authorities there cited; Pepys' *Diary*, vol. vii, pp. 65, 68, 69, 121, 142, 244; vol. viii, p. 24.

[2] The poems are most easily accessible in a volume of the 'Golden Treasury' series edited by Edward Jenkins with the title *The Cavalier and his Lady*, which contains selections from the works of the Duke and Duchess. Unfortunately, the editor, not satisfied with the Duke's verses as they were, made a good many alterations and 'improvements'.

[3] I am indebted to Mr. Francis Needham for the suggestion that the real author was Thomas Jordan, a copy of whose *Poetical Varieties* is in the library at Welbeck. These verses of 1637 are followed by a number of manuscript songs with music, most of them dated from 1657 to 1659, and one or two signed T. J. Among these songs is 'I dote, I dote', headed 'The Love sott', and dated 'Novemb: 15, 1657'.

better than the whimsical and racy poem in *The Humorous Lovers*, which begins:

> 'In my Love's despair I fell
> Down to that Furnace we call Hell',

Newcastle's authorship of which has hitherto not been disputed—a poem in a not dissimilar vein to that of *Tam o' Shanter*, and written with much fantastic humour and *élan*.

The Duke's plays and fugitive verses were not much more than the amusements of his idle moments; but his literary works which still remain to be noticed were conceived in a more serious spirit and with a more serious purpose. He wrote his two books on horsemanship as the principal authority, in England at any rate, on the subject; and he intended them to be, as they remained for a long time, the standard manuals on the arts of riding and horse-management. To-day they are merely curiosities; but, while the author is mainly interested in *balotades*, *caprioles*, *croupades*, *curvets*, *pirouettes*, *demi-pirouettes*, *passades*, *voltes*, and *demi-voltes*, his books were intended to be exhaustive, and they therefore not only contain a good deal about the anatomy of the horse, not altogether in accordance with modern ideas on the subject, but also discuss such elementary questions as 'the true Seat and the necessary Actions of a good Horseman',[1] the selection of horses, the right methods of breeding and breaking in colts, the common vices of horses, and how to cure them.

Of all Newcastle's literary works that which retains the strongest interest for posterity is one that was never intended for publication.[2] Newcastle had written a brief

[1] As, for example, 'The rider's breast ought to be in some measure advanced, his countenance pleasant and gay, but without a laugh, pointing directly between his horse's ears as he moves forward.'

[2] There is a manuscript copy at Welbeck, and the full text is printed in S. A. Strong's *Catalogue of Letters and other Historical Documents exhibited in the Library at Welbeck*, pp. 173-236. There is

political guide for the future Charles II when he was a boy under his charge; he wrote a more substantial treatise for him when he was a king in exile in case 'God should be pleased to restore him to his throne', in which his views on statecraft are much more fully and more maturely developed than in the earlier essay.

The final issue which had precipitated the Civil War in 1640 was the control of the armed forces of the Crown, and it is therefore not surprising that the Duke begins his little book with a discussion of this subject. It was essential that the King should control the military, 'for without an Armeye in your owne Handes you are butt a Kinge Uppon the Courtesye of others'. Likewise, he must hold all stores of arms and ammunition, but they should be hidden as far as possible, 'for people love not the cudgel'. In the third place, it was essential for him to be master of London, where in time of peace citizens were wont to practise arms in Finsbury Fields, to enable them to make rebellious war upon their own sovereign. In order to be sure of dominating the capital it was recommended that two forts should be built on either side of the river below Greenwich, and that strong garrisons should be installed there. Similar precautions ought to be taken at all ports: it was only natural that Newcastle, with the object lesson of Hull in his mind, should feel strongly upon this point. Incidentally, the shipping of the country would be better defended, and shipping constitutes 'the Brason Walls of Englande'. Trade, and especially export trade, ought to be stimulated to the utmost—for 'it is the merchante thatt only bringes Honye to the Hive'. In accordance with the economic thought of the time, Newcastle was a mercantilist; it was necessary that the merchant should 'carrye oute more

another copy, evidently the one sent to the King, among the Clarendon MSS. in the Bodleian. It is wrongly attributed to Clarendon in the Catalogue.

Comodeties than he bringes in'. For the furtherance of trade the author advocated the abolition of monopolies, a reduction in the standard rate of interest, and the adoption of an excise system as being the best method of taxation.

Newcastle next discusses ecclesiastical questions, for the cleavage of the Civil War had been determined at least as much by religious as by political controversies. Popery and Protestant Dissent had both proved inimical to the interests of the English monarchy. Though they looked in opposite directions with their heads, they were tied together by their tails, 'carienge the same fierbrandes off Covetousness and Ambition, to putt all into a Combustion whersoever they comme, that will not Submit to them'. Indeed, Presbytery was even more dangerous to monarchy than Popery was. The Duke held as firmly as James I had done that Presbyterianism was destructive of monarchy. This was proved, he considered, by the fact that nowhere did they co-exist. Moreover, it was less ignominious for a king to be vassal to a foreign prince, such as the Pope, than to his own subjects. Presbyterianism was lacking in respect for authority, and was even 'a little to Sauseye to Gode Almighty'.

The preservation of the Church of England was, therefore, essential to the interests of the King of England, and the government of that Church ought to be one of his chief concerns. The selection of the bishops was a matter of much moment, because they were the most effective guards against the dissemination of wrong opinions among the people. It was not surprising that one of the first aims of the rebellious party had been to drive the bishops out of the House of Lords, and to undermine their authority. In his *Letter of Instructions to Prince Charles*, Newcastle had shown how apprehensive he was of the effects of a too widely disseminated knowledge of the Bible, and of too frequent discussion of it. He still felt the same. 'The Bible

in Englishe under everye wevers and chambermayde's arme hath done us much hurte.' As we have seen, one of his first precautions, when he became commander of the King's forces north of Trent in the Civil War, had been to institute a censorship of sermons. He was now more convinced than ever, as the result of his experience, of the dangers resulting from much preaching. There should be one sermon delivered in each parish every Sunday and Holy Day, but one only. Moreover, the clergy ought not to compose their own discourses, but should use a selection which had the approval of the bishops and had been printed and circulated to the parishes. Their subject matter should be confined to the preaching of Christ as our salvation, the need of living a godly life, and the instruction of the people in 'their obedience to their superiors and governours, with all the respecte that maye bee'.

Another source of recent troubles had been the too extensive dissemination of education. If the number of scholars at the universities were cut down by half, they would be better fed and just as well taught. 'But that which hath dun most hurte is the Abundance of grammar Scholes and Ins of Courtes.' Too many were being prepared for the professions of the Church and of the Law, and in consequence the plough and the cart were being neglected, and too few were able to use a musket. The number of those available for the feeding and for the defence of the nation was proportionally too small. Another ill effect of education had been unduly to encourage discussion and controversy. Disputations ought to be confined to the schools, and books on controversial topics ought to be written only in Latin, so as to prevent ordinary people from being heated by altercation, 'for Controversye Is a Civill warr with the Pen which pulls out the sorde soone afterwards'.

The lawyers were much at fault. There were too many of them, and, as it was in their selfish interest to spin out

proceedings as long as possible, they were the cause of a great deal of popular discontent—notably in the Court of Chancery. Newcastle speaks most bitterly of its already notorious delays and of its proclivity for bringing all kinds of causes within its ambit. He greatly bemoans the defunct Star Chamber, which had brought such tranquillity to the kingdom.

The author has much to say on the need of ceremony. 'Seremonye though Itt is nothing In Itt selfe yet Itt doth everye thing.' The appropriate state and formalities for every degree of nobility, and for all officers of state should be precisely laid down, and no one should be allowed to maintain a dignity above his station. For example, no one below the rank of baroness ought to be permitted to have a carpet under her bed, whereas nowadays every wife of a Turkey merchant had her floor completely covered with rugs. There had of late been too indiscriminate a bestowal of peerages. The result was that the House of Lords had become factious—even more so than the other Chamber. New members of the peerage, puffed up by their new dignity, had imagined themselves capable of the highest office, and, being disappointed of their hopes, had started to create parties, 'So the fewer Lordes the Less faction'.

Finally, Newcastle attaches a great deal of importance to entertainment. He enumerates the amusements proper to royalty; but the most important of all is royal progresses through the countryside, because they foster loyalty among the people. Puritan asceticism and the proscription of jollity had bred rebellion. Let the maypole, the hobby-horse, the morris dance, the bagpipes, cakes and ale, and the festivities appropriate to Christmas, Shrovetide, and other holidays make their reappearance,

> 'and all the olde Holedayes, with their Mirth, and rightes sett up agen; Feastinge daylonge will be in

Merrye Englande, for Englande Is so plentifull off all provitions, that iff wee doe not eate them theye will Eate Use, so wee feaste in our Defense'.

The point of view in this political testament is clearly Hobbesian, and it might be suggested that Newcastle derived his political philosophy from Hobbes himself: but the Duke had learnt his doctrines from personal experience, and particularly from the Civil War. His point of view is essentially that of the grandee, believing in the principles of discipline and authority, and in the virtues of a ruling class. All the essentials of his political doctrine are either expressly or by implication to be found in the earlier brief treatise. His faith has been strengthened because he is profoundly convinced that recent experience has only too emphatically proved its truth. How entirely sincere and spontaneous were the opinions expressed in this little book may be appreciated by comparing them with the Duchess's records of remarks which she had heard her husband make in the course of conversation. In the book he has done little more than systematise his own table talk. The Duke's teachings may be regarded as ultra-royalist, but, if so, there is no sentiment about them, no hint of the conception of the divine right of kings. In the directness of its method, its economy of words, its absence of embroidery, and its occasional piquancy of phrase, the pamphlet bears some resemblance to those of Halifax. There is none of the wit and originality which make the latter among the most brilliant and most stimulating in our language, but there is the same straightforwardness, the same complete honesty. There is no sham or sophistication; if the author's vision be severely restricted, it is absolutely clear and unblinking.

Chapter IX

THE WRITINGS OF MARGARET CAVENDISH, DUCHESS OF NEWCASTLE

The first Duchess of Newcastle is an interesting and not unimportant prodigy in the history of English literature. She has been called 'the first of the Blue-Stockings'. It is not an entirely appropriate title because the true Blue-Stockings, Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Boscawen, etc., were essentially ladies of the *salon*, and conversation was their *métier* and their delight. Margaret Cavendish, on the contrary, was shy of society, had no conversational powers; lived as a recluse; and over and over again in her works sang the praises of the solitary or cloistered life as the happiest existence of all.[1] On the other hand, if the term Blue-Stocking be used in its incorrect popular sense as meaning a woman who is indifferent to what are popularly considered the natural interests and pleasures of womankind, and is absorbed in intellectual pursuits, then its application to the Duchess of Newcastle is abundantly justified. Never before had there been in England a woman who poured out books dealing with every imaginable branch of philosophic speculation and with most branches

[1] Cf. *The World's Olio* (2nd ed., 1671), p. 55. She also claims (p. 60) that monastic lives are very profitable to the Commonwealth, whatever they may be to the soul, since they make for peace and sobriety, and give a good example.

of learning; never before had there been a woman so intensely interested in the rights of woman. It has been generally agreed to relegate her literary works, with the single exception of her biography of her husband, to the limbo of forgotten things: yet anyone who will take the trouble to read them is sure to find, interwoven, it is true, with a vast deal of fustian, not a little that is curiously modern in interest and sometimes also in outlook. The Duchess was passionately anxious for posthumous fame. In dedicating her *Philosophical and Physical Opinions* to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, she exclaims, 'And who knows, but that after my Honourable Burial, I may have a Glorious Resurrection in Following Ages, since Time brings Strange and Unusual things to pass.' This action of hers in presenting her book to the two great universities may, she admits, seem vainglorious; but she adds, 'there is little Difference between Man and Beast, but what Ambition and Glory makes'.[1]

Margaret Lucas was born, as we say, with a pen in her hand. In the dedicatory epistle to her Life of her husband she writes: 'It pleased God to command His servant Nature to indue me with a poetical and philosophical genius, even from my birth; for I did write some books in that kind, before I was twelve years of age.'[2] No one ever enjoyed the writing of books more; no one ever wrote them with such speed and facility. She was a careless as well as a rapid writer; even more than her husband was she indifferent to form. The discipline of revision, selection, and condensation was entirely foreign to her nature. What she herself tells us of the origin of the book to which she gave the title *The World's Olio* is very self-revealing. It was written, she says, five years before it was published; locked up in a trunk and left, 'as if it had been buried in the

[1] Published 1663.

[2] *Life*, p. xxxvi.

Margaret (Lucas) Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle,
died 1673

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grave'. But when she returned to England from Antwerp, she took it out of the trunk. She says,

> 'After a view, I judged it not so well done, but that a little more care might have placed the words so, that the Language might have run smoother, which would have given the sense a greater lustre; but I being of a lazie disposition, did chuse to let it go into the World with its Defects, rather than take the pains to refine it.'[1]

The Duchess was always in a hurry and gave scant attention to such trifling matters as spelling and orthography. She admits in her 'True Relation',

> 'My letters seem rather as a ragged rout, than a well armed body, for the brain being quicker in creating, than the hand in writing, or the memory in retaining, many fancies are lost, by reason they ofttimes out-run the pen, where I, to keep speed in the Race, write so fast as I stay not so long as to write my letters plain, insomuch as some have taken my hand-writing for some strange character, and being accustomed so to do: I cannot now write very plain, when I strive to write my best, indeed my ordinary hand-writing is so bad as few can read it, so as to write it fair for the Press.'[2]

The Duchess must have given infinite trouble to her publishers!

The tantalising fear that a fancy or idea, once conceived, might flit away and escape her, before she had time to pin it down and imprison it for ever on the written page, rendered it quite impossible for the author ever to do herself

[1] 'To the Reader', *The World's Olio.*

[2] Cf. the passage in *The Blazing World* (1666), p. 89, in which the Duchess says she can write, but not so intelligibly that any reader can understand her characters. He must be specially taught to know them.

justice. She had no capacity to criticise her own works, and her husband was too easy-going and indulgent to help in that way. And so, as Sir Charles Firth said, 'she wrote a number of excellent things, but carefully buried them in a vast deal of rubbish'.[1] She had, unfortunately, a greatly exaggerated estimate of the value of an original idea. 'To create a Fancy', she says in *The World's Olio*, 'is to be like a God.' Artistry in words was mere tailoring.[2] Notions were realities. As she put it in *Philosophical and Physical Opinions*, 'Notions of Nothing cannot be, for we cannot think, but it hath some Thing, or Matter, or Substance as a ground to move on.'[3] In other words, if it be possible for you to formulate an idea, the very fact of your being able to do so is a proof that there is reality behind the idea. This conviction on Margaret's part explains a great deal; for example, how without the slightest grounding in philosophy, having read virtually none, she could write vast philosophical treatises, and then gravely dedicate them to the universities of Europe, and present copies of them to the libraries of Oxford and Cambridge Colleges, in the sure and certain faith that they would be found useful and illuminating. All her knowledge was intuitive, and she was not interested in any other kind of knowledge. Thus, while the damaging criticism to which she is obviously open is that she never consulted the authorities, the criticism which she feared and resented was that she *had* consulted them. She is at pains to assure her readers over and over again that her writings are absolutely original. Thus in *Philosophical Opinions* she protests:

> 'I desire all that are friends to my book to believe that whatsoever is new is my own, which I hope all is; for I never had any guides to direct me, nor intelligence

[1] Editor's preface to the *Life*, p. xxx. [2] P. 7.
[3] Pp. 8-9.

from any authors to advertise me, but writ according to my own natural cogitations.'

She admits some slight indebtedness to Descartes: she was no linguist and therefore could not read him in the original Latin, but she had had some few passages out of one of his books translated to her. She had met Hobbes once or twice, but, she protests, had never heard him talk on philosophy. In this same book she does indeed go so far as to admit that she had perhaps begun to write too early; she had divulged her opinions 'too soon to have them artificial and methodical'. But she adds that she does not repent having given no time to learning, 'for I consider, it is better to write wittily than learnedly'.

The works upon which the Duchess of Newcastle prided herself most are those which posterity has judged to have no value whatsoever, save as illustrations of her queer mentality. Her philosophical works are indeed strange and wonderful, and the very apotheosis of sycophancy was reached in the preposterous compliments which she received from learned societies and learned men to whom she presented copies of them—when, for example, she was assured that, if these works were not read in all the universities of Europe, it could be due only to the jealousy of other philosophers, the prevailing unpopularity of dogmatism, and the influence of the opposing philosophy of Aquinas![1]

The first in order of composition, though not the first to be published, of the Duchess's speculative works was *The World's Olio*. It consists of a number of loosely arranged aphorisms in three books. There may be some design in the pattern; but it is not easily perceived, so variegated are the topics reviewed. First, the writer discusses the subject of

[1] See Editor's preface to *Life*, p. xxix, and *Letters and Poems in Honour of that Incomparable Princess, Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle* (1676).

fame; then the relation between form and fancy;[1] different varieties of literature, especially poetry and romance; languages and music. She then turns to the themes of asceticism and monasticism, and the necessity of curbing passion by intelligence. Next she jumps off to politics and dilates upon monarchies, usurpation, tyranny, the causes of rebellion, the nature and the consequences of war. Suddenly we find we are invited to consider the proper methods of bringing up children. The writer is strongly opposed to the use of baby language and of baby games, such as blind man's buff. She concludes, 'It is no wonder that there are so few Wise Men, when Children are bred so foolishly'. She discusses marriage and misconduct in marriage, and so comes to the important problem whether women ought to paint their faces. She is very emphatically of opinion that the use of adornment is perfectly justifiable. If women

> 'must do nothing for fear of Enticing, then Mankind must neither cut their Hair, nor pair their Nails, nor shave their Beards, nor wash themselves (which would be very slovenly) for fear they should appear so handsome, that they may persuade and entice the lookers on to evil Desires'.

If such a view is taken, let mankind wallow in the mire like swine: but even there, she fears, evil desires will not be quenched. She concludes, therefore, that there is more to be said in favour of the use of cosmetics than against it; so far as general principles go. On the other hand, widows

[1] Cf. in *Poems and Fancies*:

> Most of our moderne writers now a days
> Consider not the fancy but the phrase:
> As if fine words were writ or one should say
> A woman's handsome, if her clothes be gay:
> Regarding not what beauty's in the face
> Nor what proportion doth the body grace.

ought never to paint their faces, because they should not try to marry again; and while she believes that 'all adornments of Beauty are lawful in Women, if the Intention be good', on practical grounds she is against the painting of the face because it is sometimes dangerous, the ingredients used being of a noxious nature, and because it is apt rather to disfigure than adorn. But all other means of embellishment are laudable—such as curling, powdering, and in particular the wearing of beautiful clothes, for 'Dressing is the Poetry of Women'.[1]

Book II consists of what the authoress describes as allegories, though they are rather aphorisms in the form of similes. There is some disquisition on historical topics—Antony and Cleopatra, the ancient Britons, Henry VIII, and Queen Elizabeth. The third book is much more philosophic in character, being concerned with such human attributes as memory, imagination, and reason; the passions of love, hatred, and anger; the virtues of valour, fortitude, and friendship. The Duchess next considers the material universe, the air and waters, darkness and thunder. She advances the curious theory that the reason why salt water is apt to be more ruffled than fresh water is that salt penetrates and divides, and therefore creates motion.[2] Lastly, she discusses disease and medicine—the nature and the causes of different kinds of fevers, of apoplexy, of smallpox; methods of medical treatment, such as diet, the use of drugs, blood-letting. She says a number of foolish things and one or two wise ones about therapeutics—among the latter, that the most important duty of the physician is diagnosis. For this reason she urges specialisation. Instead of the physician aiming at the acquisition of a superficial knowledge of all diseases, and possibly killing the patient because he does not recognise what is the matter, let him

[1] *The World's Olio*, pp. 173-9.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 322.

study one single disease, so that there may be a specialist for every malady.[1]

Such in the briefest outline is the strange assortment of variegated themes and of sense and nonsense, very typical of its author, which she christened *The World's Olio*.

Philosophical Fancies, written in 1652, was published in the following year. Two years later it was revised and given the more ambitious title *Philosophical and Physical Opinions*. It was further enlarged in an edition issued in 1663. This, the author's favourite work, is devoted not to the political, ethical and social problems dealt with in *The World's Olio*, but to deep questions of physics, metaphysics, and theology. As we have seen, the Duchess's knowledge of such subjects was entirely knowledge *a priori*; her opinions owed nothing to reading, experiment, or systematic study and observation. The Duke contributed to this volume an Epistle Dedicatory in verse at the beginning of it, and some opinions 'concerning the ground of Natural Philosophy' at the other end. The view expressed is the same in both. While, as we have seen, he himself occasionally made use of observation and experiment for his own speculations, he quite approved of his wife's methods. He writes in the Epistle Dedicatory:

> 'What Numbers of Philosophers did Write
> Puzzling the World, to know still what was Right,
> The more were Read, the more confounded still,
> With strange Opinions they Mankind did Fill,
> Sailing in Nature's ship, they still were Toss'd
> On Unknown, Foaming Billows, they were Lost,
> Their Sails of Folly Torn, their Rudder Broke,
> And all their Cables Slacken'd, Lost their Hope;
> Their Judgments, Understandings, Drowned so,
> Because they Writ of what they did not Know,
> Were all but Guessers, then this Lady may
> Write her Opinions, Better than all they,

[1] *The World's Olio*, pp. 344, 380-1.

And set up for her Self, for all may find,
Reading her Book, 'twill make them of her Mind,
As all Wise men will Swear, that it is Right.'

More pithily in prose he remarks:

'Since now it is a-la-mode to Write of Natural Philosophy, and I know, no body knows what is the Cause of any thing, and since they are all but guessers, not knowing, it gives every Man room to Think what he lists.'[1]

Since every suggested explanation of natural phenomena is merely surmise, says the sceptical Duke, one conjecture is just as likely to be right as another—his wife's just as much as that of Descartes.

There is little point in following the Duchess's random shots in this work. It is concerned with problems of motion and of matter, with the four worlds (as she terms them) of fire, air, water, and earth. She has a great deal to say about atoms. Aware that there have been a good many examinations of this theme since the days of Lucretius, she nevertheless characteristically insists that her conception of atoms is quite new and original. She explores the problems of creation, of reproduction, and of gravitation; she solves the puzzle of how millions of thoughts can be formed in so small a piece of matter as the human head. She ranges over the whole field of astronomy. She gives her reasons for considering it most improbable that there is any truth in the notion that the moon affects the tides. The strength of the moon is just the same at Margate as it is in Scotland; yet the hour of high water is not the same. Therefore the moon can have nothing to do with the tides![2] The conclusion of the whole work is that the creation and ordering of matter and motion are the work of God, and to understand God is not possible for man, because God has

[1] *Philosophical and Physical Opinions* (1663 ed.), p. 459.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 196.

not endowed man with the capacity to understand Him. This leads to an apostrophe to the Deity in verse, beginning:

Great God, from Thee all Infinites do flow.[1]

In 1668 the Duchess of Newcastle published *Grounds of Natural Philosophy*. It was in effect a second expanded edition of *Philosophical and Physical Opinions*, containing a new section on distinctively theological conundrums—such as the relation between God and Nature, the character of that which is immaterial, the resurrection of human kind, the joys of the blessed and the torments of the accursed, the Divine will and human free will. The most curious section of the book is one on what the Duchess terms Restoring Beds or Wombs. She has come to the conclusion that there must be such things in nature, though she cannot describe them; she can only conjecture what they are like. She has conceived the notion, she says, of there being in the centre of the Universe a sea, and in the centre of this sea an island, and in the centre of the island a rock, or what resembles a rock, though it is not one in substance, for it is compounded of all the creatures, elemental, animal, vegetable, and mineral which exist in the world, producing out of itself restoring beds, incapable of creating new things, but everlastingly restoring the old.[2] Such was the Duchess's curious explanation of the mystery of reproduction which she submitted for the consideration of all the universities of Europe!

Philosophical Letters, published in 1664, has as its subtitle *Modest Reflections upon some Opinions in Natural Philosophy, maintained by Several Famous and Learned Authors of this Age, expressed by way of Letters*. This is in both form and method different from any of the preceding

[1] *Philosophical and Physical Opinions*, pp. 454-5.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 291-9.

books, for it is supposed to consist of letters written to a lady who had sent the Duchess certain works by Descartes, Hobbes, and other philosophers, and asked her opinions about them. The author does indeed say something about the *Leviathan*, and the small quantity of Descartes which she had read; but she very speedily returns to a restatement of her own doctrines, the most novel feature of which is some modification of her terminology. It was certainly not a simplification, for the more the Duchess sought to elucidate her philosophical system, the more abstruse it became.

The title of her next treatise, *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy*, might suggest a change of view and method, but there is none. The author does, to be sure, offer a few observations on telescopes and microscopes, and the production of fire by flint and steel; but she is soon off on her accustomed flight, and before the end of the book she has made it quite clear that she does not really approve of the inductive method at all: less experiment and more introspection is what she demands of all seekers after truth.

Perhaps it will be well to discuss at this point one of the Duchess of Newcastle's works which cannot easily be classified. It takes the form of a story, but in essentials it is as philosophic as any of the disquisitions hitherto mentioned. *The Description of a New World, called The Blazing World*[1] is not only the most strange and erratic of all its author's works; it must surely be the most wild and eccentric delineation of a Utopia in literature.

The outline of this phantasmagoria is as follows. A prince abducts a well-born young lady and carries her off by sea. There is a tempest, by reason of which and the lightness of the vessel, they are driven towards the North Pole, and the ship becomes jammed in the ice. All its other occupants are frozen to death, but the lady survives. She is

[1] Published in 1666.

saved by the appearance of some extraordinary creatures resembling bears, who shew her all the kindness and civility imaginable, but carry her off to the Emperor of the Blazing World. The cities over which he rules are compounded of amber, marble, agate, coral, and alabaster, and his ships are made of gold. The Emperor takes the lady to be a goddess, and desires to worship her. She refuses divine honours, but consents to marry him. His subjects, whether she will or no, continue to regard her as a goddess. So far we have had a real if fantastic story, with plenty of action; but the lady, having become an empress, immediately turns philosopher, and proceeds to interrogate various inhabitants of the Blazing World—its bear-men, or experimental philosophers; its bird-men, or astronomers; its ape-men, or chemists; its fox-men, or politicians; its jackdaw-men, or creators, etc. Together they proceed to discuss all the old enigmas dear to the heart of the Duchess.

The Empress builds chapels and convents, and converts the Blazing World to her religion—by tact and her own ingenuity, without enforcement or bloodshed. We now launch into mysticism, and consider the mystic properties of numbers, the nature of the soul, and the possibility of its migrating from one body into another. The Empress, being convinced of the feasibility of such a transference, decides to make use of the soul of a philosopher as a scribe. She first thinks of summoning the soul of Plato, Aristotle or Pythagoras, only to be told that these learned and estimable men were too completely wedded to their own opinions to be prepared to act as scribe to another. Then, says the Empress, she will have Galileo or Descartes. But she is informed that they are both so self-conceited that they would scorn to act as scribe to a woman. In this dilemma a new suggestion is made to the Empress. She is informed that there is a lady, the Duchess of Newcastle, who, although not one of the most learned, witty, and

ingenious of writers, is on the other hand a rational author, whose books are based on sense and reason, and she undoubtedly would be glad to do the Empress all the service she could. The Empress therefore decides to have the Duchess's soul sent to her.

The Duchess's soul proves to be melancholy. Why is it sad? Because it is so ambitious. What is its ambition? To be a great princess. But, says the Empress, you are one already—for you are a Duchess, and you have the privilege to be described as a princess. It appears, however, that what the Duchess really wants is to become an empress. She asks whether there is any other world besides the earth, the Blazing World, and the world of spirits, in which she could rule as empress. She is told that there are many; but it is suggested that an immaterial world might be preferable to a material one, for this she could herself create. After a while it is decided that the Duchess's soul shall conduct the Empress on a tour to England, and the two pay a visit to Nottinghamshire. The Empress is delighted with Sherwood Forest, and so they reach Welbeck, 'an habitation not so magnificent as useful'. They watch the Duke of Newcastle actively engaged in his riding-house; but the Duchess's soul is so much troubled at seeing her husband perspiring freely before his meal, that it leaves its 'aereal Vehicle', and enters into her Lord! The Empress's soul, thus abandoned, immediately follows suit, and thus there are three souls in one body, 'a Platonic Seraglio'. The Duchess's soul is at first inclined to be jealous; but then, realising that there can be no adultery between platonic lovers, casts away this mean suspicion, and finds the intimate association of the three souls together very pleasant. But the Emperor of the Blazing World became very melancholy without his spouse, so his wife's soul returned to him, and the Duke and Duchess of Newcastle felt quite lonely without it!

The next interlude in this strange fantasy takes the form of the Duchess making an attempt to compose the differences between her Lord and Fortune. Assisted by Honesty, she pleads his cause in a court, with Folly and Rashness as counsel on the other side. She is then summoned back to the Blazing World in order to advise the Emperor how to repel a hostile invasion. She proves herself a splendid military expert, and as the result of her counsels the enemy are routed, partly by the use of submarines and of fire-stones kindled into flame by water. After the excitement of the war there follow prolonged conversations between Emperor, Empress, and Duchess. The last episode of interest in the book is the Emperor's construction of a golden stable adorned with gems—the sort of thing that would be really satisfactory to the Duke of Newcastle, were he able to afford it! Eventually the Duchess's soul decides to return for good to the earth, and the Duke is given a full account of all its adventures, and particulars about the stables. Newcastle, with a rueful smile, says he is sorry that there is no easy passage-way between the two worlds; 'but', says he, 'I have always found an Obstruction to my Good Fortunes.' Such is the quaint and homely conclusion of this astonishing fiction.

The *Blazing World* contains a notable passage in which the Emperor contemplates the building of a theatre. The soul of the Duchess at once jumps at the chance of having her own plays produced in it. She had been unable to find any earthly theatre prepared to accept them, and it is evident that the refusal rankled. The Wits had condemned them as being incapable of being acted because they did not conform to their rules of art and their artificial standards of wit and humour. They might now be acted in the Blazing World though they were rejected by 'the Blinking-World of wit'!

The Duchess published no fewer than nineteen plays—

fourteen of them in 1662, the remainder six years later.[1] It is certainly true that they conform to no dramatic rules. The author despised all unities of time and place, all conventions, precedents, and precepts. As usual she boasted of this originality. In a 'General Prologue to all my Playes', she exclaims:

> But, Noble Readers, do not think my Playes
> Are such as have been writ in former daies.

She owes nothing to Shakespeare, Jonson, Beaumont, Fletcher.

> I could not steal their Wit, nor Plots out take,
> All my Playes Plots my own poor brain did make.

She has not borrowed from Plutarch or from romances,

> As others have, for to assist their Wit,
> But I upon my own Foundation writ.

Originality the Duchess's plays undoubtedly possess, but they have little else to recommend them. From a purely dramatic point of view they are perhaps the worst plays ever published; for they are almost entirely undramatic. Very little attempt is made at characterisation, the persons being as a rule pure abstractions, as their names—Prudence, Subtlety, Lady Perfection, Lord Melancholy, etc., indicate. The dialogue is, as a rule, exceedingly wearisome, being full of a stilted conventional wit, without any bite or humour. In some of the plays there is quite a considerable amount of incident—sometimes even violent incident, which if used by a real dramatist, could not have failed to be moving and exciting; but the Duchess views her own scenes of vehement action or passion with a seraphic calm

[1] Langbaine, *op. cit.*, pp. 390-1, gives a complete list of the plays. He declines to pronounce any judgment upon them, but prefers to imitate 'the Carriage of *Julius Scaliger* to the *Roman Sulpitia*', by concluding with him, *Igitur ut tam laudabilis Heroinae Ratio habeatur, non ausim abjicere et judicii severitatem.*

and detachment. For she employs the drama simply as a vehicle for the outpouring of her own fancies, and the plays are, despite their form, as much essays in philosophy as her avowedly philosophical works. They abound in set orations of quite intolerable length, frequently filling several long pages, on abstract questions which have no connection with the action whatsoever. The Duchess provides us with a chaotic travesty of the drama of ideas; not with the comedy of manners. Only one characteristic do her plays share with those of her contemporary playwrights—namely, the frequent indelicacy of situation and language; and students of Restoration drama might, when seeking an explanation of the prevailing lubricity of the stage, bear in mind that this characteristic is found in the works of a noble lady of very retiring disposition, of the highest character and principles, who must speedily have become disabused of any notion that her plays would ever see the footlights and have written the great majority of them without any such illusion.

The majority of the plays are in essence nothing but prolonged and wearisome discussions of these themes in natural, ethical, and political philosophy of which the Duchess, unlike her readers, never tired. This may be said truly, for example, of those entitled *Love's Adventures*, *The Several Wits*, *The Wits' Cabals*, *The Apocryphal Ladies*, and *The Sociable Companions*, whatever the nature of their plots. Even *The Unnatural Tragedie*, which is a tragedy indeed, compounded of murder, suicide and incest, is provided with a chorus of Matrons and Sociable Virgins, who discuss at the utmost length the themes of women's rights, love and virtue, and the genius of Homer.

There are other of the Duchess's plays whose most outstanding characteristic is the wildness and uncouthness of their plots and incidents. For example, in *Youth's Glory and Death's Banquet*, the principal character is Lady Sans-

pareile, who moralises with astonishing verbosity until she dies; but the principal interest is provided by the misfortunes of Lady Innocent, who, because she is falsely suspected by her husband, resolves to die, dresses in white, binds up her hair with coloured ribbons, mounts a hearse, draped in black and decorated with garlands of cypress and myrtle for the occasion, sings ditties (supplied by the Marquess) and then quietly stabs herself. Lady Incontinent, the wicked slanderer, hangs herself; Falsehood, the informer, falls down dead; Sir Thomas Father Love, Sanspareile's father, after pronouncing a funeral sermon on his incomparable daughter, does the same; Lord de l'Amour, on finding that he has wronged his wife, falls on his sword. Unconscious absurdity could hardly go further than it does in this melancholy history. *The Religious* is another very sad tale, in which Lady Perfection and Lord Melancholy are forcibly separated after a child-marriage, whereupon the former enters a convent and the latter is forced by his father to marry again. Disencumbered at last of his second wife, Melancholy endeavours to die together with Perfection, using a double-pointed sword for the purpose. They fail in this, and as the lady is resolved not to break her vows of chastity, a convenient solution is found for their troubles by Melancholy taking the same vows, entering the same convent, and marrying his love, for 'what is more Chast than lawful Marriage?'

Two or three of the plays have superior interest to the rest. *The Sociable Companions; or The Female Wits*, despite its unpromising title, which suggests a rigmarole of the Duchess's favourite type, has a good deal more vigour than usual; and the story of how Peg fixes the paternity of her child on Get-all, the usurer, by means of a spiritual trial, and then secures him as a husband because she is comely, and of how, while he steadfastly denies ever having had a child by her, he would very much like to have

the chance, while fantastic, is certainly amusing. *The Presence* is immensely lengthy, covering one hundred and fifty-two pages, but is remarkable for the strong biographical interest for which it has already been mentioned. *The Bridals*, which contrasts the dutiful attitude of Lady Virtue on her wedding-night with the pretended modesty of Lady Coy, has more life than most of the plays. The same characters reappear in *The Convent of Pleasure*, a highly imaginative work, and a very strange mixture, in which ladies in travail, water nymphs, sea goddesses, shepherds and shepherdesses, appear, and the pastoral element gives the writer an opportunity to introduce lyrics which are a good deal more felicitous than her attempts at dialogue.

But both in respect of its subject and of its incidents, *Bell in Campo* is the most interesting of all the Duchess of Newcastle's plays. The Kingdom of Reformation and the Kingdom of Faction are at war with one another. Lady Victoria persuades her husband, the Lord General of the former country, to allow her to accompany him to the front, but when active operations are about to commence, she is sent home. She and other women—wives, mistresses, and friends, then decide to form an army of their own. These Heroickesses, as they are termed, agree always to wear armour when they are on duty, and when not engaged in military activities to spend their spare time in athletic pursuits, such as running, riding, vaulting, and wrestling. The army of the Kingdom of Faction is victorious; whereupon the Heroickesses come to the rescue of the vanquished male army, and retrieve the situation. They take an important fortress, and then graciously allow the male army the empty triumph of formally entering it. The male army is forced to acknowledge its indebtedness to the Heroickesses; and when the war is carried into the enemy's country its commander offers them all the

spoils, as a tribute to their splendid achievements. Finally the King of Reformation grants to the women of his land the following rights: that they shall henceforth always be mistresses in their own homes and families, always keep the purse, sit at the upper end of the table—above their husbands, command the servants and decide what wages they are to receive, order what provisions they choose, eat what they like and as much as they like, claim all jewels, plate and furniture as their own, wear whatever kind of clothes they please, go abroad whenever they like and give account to none, and attend plays, masques, balls to their hearts' content. *Bell in Campo* is superior to all its author's other plays in possessing real unity of theme; and if there are plenty of long speeches, they are never discursive, but are all addressed to the subject of the play—the rights of women. The Duchess was for ever writing about that issue, but she never wrote about it elsewhere so forcibly as in this play, which must be the earliest of all vigorous advocacies of the cause.

The Duchess loved writing speeches, and in addition to the great quantity contained in her dramatic works there are the hundred and eighty which appear under the title of *Orations of Divers Sorts, accomodated to Divers Places*.[1] As these addresses are on the whole much briefer than those which are incorporated in the plays, many readers may find them a good deal more palatable. There are speeches suitable for all sorts of people and for all sorts of occasions. There are speeches delivered to soldiers after the loss of a battle, to timid soldiers before a battle, and to mutinous soldiers; royal speeches made to obedient subjects and to rebellious subjects; forensic speeches delivered in several courts of jurisdiction; funeral orations, death-bed speeches; speeches appropriate for a quarter-drunk gentleman, and even for a half-drunk gentleman.

[1] First published in 1662; a second edition in 1668.

In his Essay, 'The Two Races of Men', Charles Lamb addresses his friend James Kenny:

> 'But what moved thee, wayward, spiteful K, to be so importunate as to carry off with thee, in spite of tears and adjunctions to thee to forbear, the Letters of that princely woman, the thrice noble Margaret Newcastle?'

The Letters to which Lamb refers are the *CCXI Sociable Letters*, published in 1664.[1] They are as haphazard and disjointed as most of their writer's outpourings. There are the inevitable speculations about atoms and the planets, health and disease; but there is also some literary criticism, including some excellent sound sense on Shakespeare (in which the author shews a more balanced judgment than many better-known Shakespearian commentators). In a sense it may be said that the chief subject is the writer herself, for there is a good deal of autobiographical information to be culled from this source, and we read a good deal about her experiences on the Continent as well as about her likes and dislikes—chief among the latter Puritans and violent exercise, if only because it causes perspiration. The Duchess, who probably never perspired at all, seems to have regarded the process as most undesirable, as a loss of strength and virtue.

Much better than her philosophic works, her plays, her orations, or her letters, are Margaret's poems. It is true that she could be abstruse and involved in verse a well as in prose, and that as she grew older she spoilt her poems by intricate and tortured metaphysical conceits (as indeed many better-known poets of her day did also): but she had a genuine gift of song, and could at her best achieve real charm and delicacy both of feeling and expression. In her first published collection of verse—*Poems and*

[1] Among the purely imaginary epistles are a few addressed to real people.

Fancies[1]—there are some wholly delightful things, such as the 'Dialogue between Melancholy and Mirth', very quaint and attractive, 'Man's Short Life and Foolish Ambition', which has a grave and measured dignity, found also in the fine lines beginning 'Upon a grave outrageous Sorrow sat'. The author's address to her readers in which she modestly disclaims the title of poet, but insists upon it for her husband, is sweet and gracious:

> A Poet I am neither borne nor bred,
> But to a witty Poet married:
> Whose Brain is Fresh and Pleasant, as the Spring,
> Where Fancies grow, and where the Muses sing:
> There oft I leane my Head, and list'ning, hark,
> To heare his words, and all his Fancies mark;
> And from that Garden flow'rs of Fancies take
> Whereof a Posie up in verse I make,
> Thus I, that have no Garden of mine owne,
> There gather Flowers that are newly blowne.

Margaret was happiest of all when she wrote about the fairies. There is a light gossamer touch about the whole of the poem entitled 'The Pastime of the Queen of the Fairies', in which Queen Mab's day from rising to bed-time is described. It is so exactly right that in its vein it could hardly be bettered. Similarly light of touch and perfect of diction are the lines:

> Sir Charles into my chamber coming in,
> When I was writing of my Fairy Queen;
> I pray, said he, when Queen Mab you doe see,
> Present my service to her Majesty:
> And tell her, I have heard Fames loud report,
> Both of her Beauty, and her stately Court.
> When I Queen Mab within my Fancy view'd
> My Thoughts bow'd low, fearing I should be rude;
> Kissing her Garment thin, which Fancy made,
> I knelt upon a Thought, like one that pray'd;

[1] Published in 1653.

In whispers soft I did present
His humble service, which in mirth was sent;
Thus by imagination I have been
In Fairy Court, and seen the Fairy Queen.
For why, imagination runs about
In every place, yet none can trace it out.[1]

Of the same kind and of equal felicity are the lines which occur in the play, *The Convent of Pleasure*, beginning, 'My Cabinets are Oyster-shells.'[2]

The simplicity and directness of utterance which marks the best in *Poems and Fancies* is to be found also in that other early work, *Nature's Pictures drawn by Fancies Pencil*, the extremely interesting fragment of autobiography, to which frequent reference has already been made, and in the stories both in verse and in prose of which the remainder of the volume consists. The poems are longer and less good than in the previous collection, but they are all unforced, and the one entitled 'The Tale of the four Seasons of the Year' shews a genuine feeling for nature.[3] Nearly all the tales in prose can be read with pleasure, some even possessing the virtue of pithiness. Several, such as 'The Marriage of Life and Death',[4] the three 'Moral Tales of the Ant and the Bee' and 'The Tale of the Woodcock and the Cow' are attractive allegories;[5] but the most remarkable is 'The Contract',[6] a simple straightforward story of some thirty pages about a nobleman who, having in order to content his father on his death-bed, agreed to be betrothed to a child, was afterwards unfaithful to the contract and married another. Some years later he

[1] The above-mentioned poems, 'improved' and modernised, will be found in *The Cavalier and his Lady* (ed. E. Jenkins, 1872), pp. 102-8, 123-4, 87-9, 81-3.

[2] *Plays never before Printed—The Convent of Pleasure*, pp. 42-3; also in *The Cavalier and his Lady*, pp. 95-6.

[3] *Nature's Pictures*, pp. 67-70.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 136-7.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 162-8.

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 183-214.

met the girl to whom he had been affianced and, being dazzled by her extreme beauty, fell deeply in love with her, and eventually after many difficulties he was able to marry her. In this short story the characters (unlike those in the Duchess's plays) are real flesh and blood; the action is brisk and vigorous; the scenes vivid, and the dialogue sharp, crisp, and dramatic. Take, for example, the discussion between the heroine and the door-keeper who at first refuses to allow her to enter the room where a masque is being held.

'Pray Sir, said she to the Door-Keeper, if it be no injury to your Authority, you will be so civil as to let us pass by.

Now by my troth, said he, thou hast such a pleasing Face, none can deny thee: but now I look upon you better, you shall not go in.

Why Sir? said she.

Why, said he, you will make the Painter and the Poet lose their design, for the one expects to enter in at the Ears of the Assembly, and the other at their Eyes, and your Beauty will blinde the one, and stop the other, besides, said he, all the Ladies will curse me.

Heaven forbid, said she, that I should be the cause of Curses; and to prevent that, I will return back again.

Nay Lady, said he, I have not the power to let you go back, wherefore pray pass.

Sir, said she, I must have this Gentleman along with me.

Even who you please, said he, I can deny you nothing, Angels must be obeyed.'[1]

Also, by way of illustration, take these really charming lines:

Heaven direct you for the best, said she, it is late, good night.

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 191.

You will give me leave, said he, to kiss your hands.

I cannot deny my hand, said she, to him that hath my heart.[1]

There is so much that is delightful, and indeed beautiful, in the earliest works of the Duchess of Newcastle, that it is a pity she did not confine herself to the realms of Queen Mab, to the fairyland where the fancy which she loved to follow is the legitimate guide, and to the world of animals and birds and flowers which she loved and knew by those powers of observation the use of which was almost anathema to her in the study of those abstruse problems of natural philosophy to which she devoted so much misspent time and energy. Had she left nothing but *Poems and Fancies*, *Nature's Pictures drawn by Fancy's Pencil*, and her biography of the Duke, it is quite safe to say that her readers would have been far more numerous and her fame much higher. The unfortunate effect of her ponderous plays and philosophic dissertations has been to create such a reputation for her that readers have been kept away, not only from those arid tracks which they could not have endured, but also from charming pathways which they might have trod with pleasure, had they known of their existence. As it is, by one work only is the Duchess known—her life of the Duke, and that happily has long been recognised as a classic.

It did not always please. Pepys, who had no love for the Newcastles, calls it 'the ridiculous History of My Lord Newcastle, wrote by his wife, which shews her to be a mad, conceited, ridiculous woman, and he an asse to suffer her to

[1] *Nature's Pictures*, p. 204. See H. Ten Eyck Perry, *op. cit.*, pp. 207-8: '. . . Here the Duchess enters upon the domain of the novel. Her imagination has worked up a simple anecdote into sixty pages of sustained interest, and that without tradition or precedent. . . . A tale like this could have exerted little influence upon future novelists, but it demands notice amidst the ferment which preceded the birth of a new form of art.'

Monseigneur le Marquis
et
Madame la Marquise
Le Comte de Pollingbroke
et
Madame la Comtesse
Monsieur Chetre
et
Madame Marie sa Femme
Les deux Seigneurs qui sont a Cheval et les trois Dames qui les
regardent sont tous enfans de Monseigneur le Marquis et les deux
autres Dames sont femmes de ces deux Seigneurs et les trois
hommes sont mariés de ces trois Dames filles de Monseigneur de Marquis
Et le Seigneur Henry Cavendisshe le Cadet

The Marquess and Marchioness of Newcastle with their family; in the foreground are the Marquess's sons, Charles, Viscount Mansfield, and Henry Cavendish, later 2nd Duke of Newcastle

Méthode . . . nouvelle de Dresser les Chevaux, Antwerp, 1657

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write what she writes to him, and of him'.[1] Pepys possessed what is sometimes known as a 'masculine understanding'; it was impervious to the artless charm of this book, which so much endeared it, and other works of the Duchess in which the same quality is uppermost, to the whimsical nature of Charles Lamb. Much is to be said in criticism of the biography. It may be urged that the adulation is extreme; that the value of the first part of the book, which deals with much the most important period of the Duke's life, is not as great as might have been expected; that the arrangement of the work is thoroughly bad, the third section being a clumsy recapitulation, adding little to our information; that the fourth section, consisting of a collection of the Duke's aphorisms, and some general remarks by the author, which are not always very illuminating or indeed even relevant, is not a very happy ending to the biography. Yet every candid reader must admit that the very features of the book which, regarded in detail, seem manifest defects are to some extent at all events the explanation of its success as a whole. The inconsecutive method of following up narrative by a record of personal impressions, and that again by stray quotations from the Duke's table talk, has the effect of creating a really vivid impression of his personality. In eschewing art the writer has accidentally achieved it. Another reason of the book's success is that, while the author ruined so much of her later work by extreme copiousness, here she contrives to be brief; and yet another reason is that, as we have just seen, Margaret Cavendish could be extremely observant of the things she really understood. She knew very little about atoms; she did know her husband. She helps us to know him largely because of the familiar details which she records with such affectionate intimacy and such simple naturalness.

[1] *Pepys' Diary*, vol. vii, p. 344; 18 March, 1667.

It is not easy to form a just and balanced estimate of a writer so full of contradictions as the Duchess of Newcastle, of one who produced such pearls and overlaid them with such masses of rubbish, who could be at times so crisply concise and at other times so enormously long-winded, whose touch at its best was as light as gossamer, and at its worst as heavy as lead, who could be so charmingly simple and yet become so contorted and involved in the very worst obscurities of metaphysical wit and pseudo-scientific jargon. Those who regard only the best may be led into exaggerated praise of what was certainly 'a fine brain and a generous nature';[1] those who consider only the dull and the extravagant may be equally misguided in their depreciation. The truth surely is that Margaret Cavendish was a woman of very remarkable character and intelligence, possessed of genuine inspiration and originality, who suffered from certain obvious defects in her own constitution and certain equally obvious drawbacks in her upbringing and environment. Her worst misfortune was that she was never under any critical restraint. In the second place, although possessed of an unquenchable thirst for knowledge, she was not a learned woman; and it is doubtful if she possessed the capacity for learning, the patience and self-discipline needed to acquire the prosaic rudiments of the subjects which she endeavoured to master by inspired guess-work. She was led by her curiosity concerning the ultimate secrets of life and nature, by the unfortunate persuasion that they were ascertainable by a purely deductive method, and by the reigning craze of her day for the metaphysical, to waste her genuine imaginative gifts in realms appropriate to scientific investigation instead of keeping them for the fairies. As she became more and more of a recluse, the tendency to misdirect her energies

[1] Keith Feiling, *A History of the Tory Party* (1924), p. 48.

increased, so that, as one critic has said, 'her fairies, if they survived at all, grew up into hippopotami'.[1]

While it was in the realm of fancy that Margaret Cavendish was most at home, it is a great mistake to disregard all her opinions. Her views on atoms and on physical nature generally may be negligible—the same is true of nearly all her contemporaries, even the most enlightened; but her judgments on politics, on social customs and manners, and most of all on her own sex, are almost always interesting, and frequently acute. Her political beliefs were those of her husband. Like him, she deeply abhorred the wicked sin of rebellion; she detested what seemed to her to be the arrogance of the Puritan, which bred the habit of disrespect for authority, and so was productive of anarchy. Her hatred of arrogance in itself is seen in her castigation of the Englishman's pride in a short poem entitled, 'The Ruine of the Island';[2] and her hatred of war, as the begetter of hard-heartedness, cruelty, atheism, prodigality, in the *Orations* and in the *Sociable Letters*.[3] She wishes men were as harmless as most beasts are; the world would be quieter and happier. There was so much ill-nature in mankind that 'what they cannot make use of, they will strive to destroy'.[4] Her outlook on human vices and frailties was conditioned—some may say distorted—by her experiences of civil discord; but it is at any rate interesting and valuable as an illustration of the influence of such experience upon a very sensitive and reflective mind. Still more interesting, and indeed very remarkable, are her views on woman's position in society. Conscious of her own powers, inevitably aware of the

[1] Virginia Woolf, *The Common Reader*, p. 106.

[2] In *Poems and Fancies*.

[3] See, for example, *Orations of Divers Sorts*, p. 4; *Sociable Letters*, pp. 136-7; *The World's Olio*, p. 105.

[4] *The World's Olio*, p. 68.

intellectual failings of most of her sex, she deplores feminine absorption in the trivialities of gossip, dancing, and match-making.[1] Women must rest content with their inferior status in politics and in the business of life, so long as they cannot educate themselves to make better use of their faculties. That their faculties are not inherently inferior to men's she is convinced. Men despise women's brains simply because women have weaker bodies and have never been trained for arts and crafts, for government and scholarship. Time and custom are the parents of strength and knowledge. Hence women must accustom themselves to undertake actions and duties which will make men change their opinion of the other sex and their attitude towards them, and persuade them that women are fit to co-operate with them in the work of the world and the ruling of it.[2] Has the woman's movement of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries produced anything wiser and more penetrating than the writings of Margaret Cavendish on woman's powers and woman's rights? And she was also a prophet. She soberly recognised that with women as they were in her day there was no possibility of their extending their influence; but she also knew that time would produce women with intellectual capacity, and what was more important, intellectual ambition as great as her own, and that with the opportunity would come the extended influence of her sex.

There is, then, a good deal of wisdom to be found locked up in the works of the Duchess of Newcastle, and there is not a little beauty. There are lovely cadences in her prose as well as in her poetry—particularly in such passages as those in which she pays tribute to the memory of her mother and of Sir Charles Cavendish, where a deeply felt

[1] *Sociable Letters*, pp. 18-20.

[2] See notably the great speech of Lady Victoria to her Heroickesses in *Bell in Campo*, *Plays*, pp. 588-93.

emotion is expressed in words of serene dignity. Because of such fine passages, because of the quaint charm which sometimes suffuses even her most wayward and preposterous conceits, because of the not infrequent shrewdness and wisdom of her comments upon the world and mankind, because of her tender understanding of birds and animals, there is, despite all their flagrant shortcomings, much to admire in the works of that 'dear friend' of Charles Lamb—'the thrice noble, chaste and virtuous—but again, somewhat fantastical and original-brained, generous Margaret Newcastle'.[1]

Essays of Elia—'Mackery End in Hertfordshire'.

Chapter X

HENRY, SECOND DUKE OF NEWCASTLE

The first Duke of Newcastle's elder surviving son, Charles, having died in June, 1659, the second, Henry, became known as Viscount Mansfield, and on his father's receiving his dukedom in June 1665, by the courtesy title of Earl of Ogle, one of his father's new dignities. He was pressed, together with his elder brother, on the field of Marston Moor, though he was only a boy of sixteen at the time, and he accompanied his father into his exile on the Continent. The Duchess in her account of her husband's blessings enumerates among them his 'dutiful and obedient children, free from vices, noble and generous in their natures and actions; who did all that lay in their power to support my Lord their father in his banishment'.[1] Presumably we may take this encomium as a description of Henry's character in his stepmother's eyes. As we have already seen, the two sons were shortly despatched back to England in the hope that they might be able to make speedy and profitable marriage alliances, to the relief of the family fortunes. But this hope was not fulfilled; and it was not until some years later that, to quote Arthur Collins,

> 'being Heir Apparent, and discerning the Interest which William Pierpoint (second son to Robert, Earl of Kingston) had with the Powers at that Time in Being; as also,

[1] *Life*, p. 101.

Henry Cavendish, 2nd Duke of Newcastle, 1631–91
from a painting by G. Morphy

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that he was related to him;[1] he took to Wife Frances, his eldest Daughter; but, being always loyal to Charles II and refusing to comply with the Usurpers, had little Favour shewed to him'.[2]

Immediately after the Restoration Henry became Member of Parliament for Derbyshire, and in the following year he sat for Northumberland. He held the position of Master of the Robes from 29 May, 1660, till 25 March, 1662, when he was succeeded by Laurence Hyde: but he was a Gentleman of the Bedchamber until the death of Charles II. On 15 June, 1670, he was sworn a member of the Privy Council. He was also Governor both of Newcastle-on-Tyne and of Berwick. On his father's death he was awarded the Garter thus rendered vacant, and he also succeeded to his father's position of Chief Justice in Eyre of Trent North,[3] and became Lord-lieutenant of Nottinghamshire.

We know little of the relations between the first Duke of Newcastle and his family apart from the slight incidental references to be found in the Duchess's biography. We find the Duke writing in 1670 to his son about the latter's children, and speaking of the devotion of his only son, Henry, to his grandmother and of her devotion to him.[4] But Ogle seems to have resented his step-mother's influence over his father, for in August, 1671, he describes himself as 'very mallencholly, finding my Father more persuaded by his wife

[1] The eldest of the daughters of Sir William Cavendish, grandfather of the first Duke of Newcastle, Frances, had married Sir Henry Pierrepont, of Holm Pierrepont, Notts. Her second son was Robert, Earl of Kingston-upon-Hull, and his second son, William, was the father of Frances Pierrepont.

[2] *Historical Collections*, p. 46.

[3] See Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

[4] See *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 149. Two sons, both named William, died in infancy.

than I could thinke it possible', and he speaks of 'unkindness at Welbeck'.[1] On hearing of the death of the first Duke, the King immediately gave his son leave to repair to Welbeck, saying 'I should be most sorry for the death of my old friend, but that so very worthy and honest a man is the better for it'.[2] His position in the Bedchamber brought Newcastle into close and constant contact with the King; and he appears to have persuaded himself that Charles designed to offer him a far more important employment—that of Secretary of State—though his remark that, as he had not been offered such an appointment in better times, now that they were dangerous he was not prepared to accept, may be interpreted to mean that he did not really entertain the hope of which he boasted.[3]

The new Duke seems to have been on specially friendly terms with the Earl of Danby. The letter in which he describes himself as 'very mallencholly' is addressed to Danby. In this he speaks of the latter's great friendship and affection towards him, and he on his side protests that whatever in the world he can do for his friend he will do with 'intyre Love' to him. He was given an opportunity to prove his devotion when in March, 1679, a Bill of Attainder was brought against Danby. In anticipation of the Bill being carried from the House of Commons up to the other Chamber, the Earl appealed to his friend to support him there, making a 'humble request' that 'you would please to be so generous and charitable as to come up and assist mee

[1] See Strong, *Catalogue of Letters at Welbeck*, pp. 63-4, 10 August, 1671.

[2] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 152.

[3] *Reresby's Memoirs* (ed. A. Browning, Glasgow, 1936), pp. 210-11. The appearance of the complete text of *Reresby's Memoirs*, edited by Professor Browning, is most opportune, as it contains numerous references to the second Duke of Newcastle which are not to be found in previous editions.

Frances (Pierrepont) Cavendish, wife of
Henry, 2nd Duke of Newcastle, 1630–95
from a painting by M. Beale

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against such a cruelty'.[1] A few months later, when the Duke of York (the future James II) paid a visit to Welbeck, Newcastle used the opportunity to speak to him on behalf of Danby.[2]

The two friends are found in opposing camps in the reign of James II. The second Duke of Newcastle maintained the family tradition of loyalty to the house of Stuart when misfortunes came upon it once again, while Danby was one of the most prominent supporters of William of Orange in 1688. When the rebellion of the Duke of Monmouth came to its tragic close at Sedgemoor on 5 July, 1685, and his unhappy adherents were being harried in the West Country, Newcastle, in his capacity as Lord-lieutenant of Nottinghamshire and Northumberland, received instructions from the Earl of Sunderland to prevent the escape of any rebels who might attempt to break away into the north, by placing guards at important points, by apprehending any persons travelling up and down the country, unless they were personally very well known, by searching suspicious places and houses, and by keeping a watch on the coast.[3] A little later on further orders were sent to the Duke to arrest all disaffected and suspicious characters, especially Noncon-

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, pp. 153-4. Danby had been impeached in December 1678, but the King prorogued and then dissolved the Parliament. When, upon the Commons renewing their attack in the next Parliament, the King announced that he had given his minister a free pardon, the Lower House proceeded to bring a Bill of Attainder against him. The Bill was accepted of the Lords, and on 10 April, 1679, Danby surrendered himself at the bar of the House and was sent to the Tower.

[2] H.M.C., XIV[th] Rept., app., pt. ix, *Lindsey MSS.*, p. 417. Newcastle excused himself from going to London on Danby's behalf, both in April and again in October, on the ground of ill-health. On the second occasion (6 October) he wrote: ' I most earnestly desire to stay in the country, for I am so crazy, I am fit for no place but what is very private and retired.' *Ibid.*, pp. 405, 417.

[3] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 157. Earl of Sunderland to Duke of Newcastle, 7 July, 1685.

formist ministers and persons who had taken up arms against Charles I and Charles II. Those who were held merely on such general grounds of suspicion might subsequently be released, but others, against whom it was possible to bring a charge of aiding and abetting the rebels, were to be kept in strict custody for trial at the next assizes.[1]

The intense severity with which Monmouth's followers were punished was the first factor appreciably to turn against James II the public sentiment, which had, at his accession, been overwhelmingly in favour of him despite his Roman Catholicism; it would seem also that the ease with which the rebellion had been suppressed encouraged James to embark upon his short-sighted policy of endeavouring to improve the lot of his co-religionists by unconstitutional means. Reresby, spending a few days with the Duke of Newcastle at Welbeck in August, 1686, found him very sensible of the fact that the King was going on overfast in promoting his own religion, but he 'did resolve to be very loyall, and yet firm to his religion'.[2] In the country generally the royal policy roused so intense an opposition that in three years he lost his throne. The royal policy was resented by no class of the population more than by the great nobility, and among the chief instigators of the enterprise of William of Orange were the three Earls of Danby, Devonshire, and Shrewsbury. The movement had many other noble supporters in all parts of the country. But the Duke of Newcastle was one of those in whom the King could place entire confidence. On the removal of many Lords-lieutenant from their offices on their refusal to support the royal efforts to secure the repeal of the Test Act in 1687, their places were given to persons who as a rule had but little to recommend them save their being Roman

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 159, 16 July.

[2] *Reresby's Memoirs*, p. 431.

Catholics, or pleasing to the King by reason of their subservience. Such men possessed little local influence, and, however strong their willingness to carry out the royal wishes, they had little power to do so. It proved impossible to find fit persons for the three ridings of Yorkshire, and as it was essential that so important a county should be controlled by one who had the necessary prestige, in October, 1688, the Duke of Newcastle became Lord-lieutenant of all three ridings; whereupon he called all the gentry of the county together and appointed deputy lieutenants and militia officers.[1] Already the Duke in his capacity as Lord-lieutenant of Nottinghamshire had found it impossible to carry out the King's orders to appoint Roman Catholics and Nonconformists as magistrates in that county. He had been able to discover four suitable Roman Catholics, but suitable Nonconformist gentlemen there were none.[2] Now in Yorkshire he was going to find the task of working for the King even more difficult. He reported to Lord Sunderland, the Secretary of State, that the Roman Catholics were the 'most reddy to serve his Majesty with great affection and loyallty'; but even James had by this time appreciated the inexpediency, in view of the strength of Protestant feeling, of confiding in his co-religionists too openly.[3]

In October William of Orange was ready to start for England, and the danger of invasion, which James until quite recently had not taken very seriously, became obviously grave. On the 19th William sailed from Helvoetsluys. He was driven back by a violent westerly gale, which did some damage to his fleet, and James was given a brief respite. Where the Prince of Orange would decide to land could be only a matter of conjecture. He actually did land at Torbay, a short distance from the spot from which Monmouth had

[1] *Reresby's Memoirs*, pp. 516-17.
[2] See K. Feiling, *op. cit.*, p. 219.
[3] *Reresby's Memoirs*, p. 517.

started on his ill-starred enterprise. In view of the disastrous termination of that venture, the West Country might have been expected to be the very last part of England that would be chosen for the new one. It was thought that the descent would probably be on the east coast, and Bridlington Bay was considered a likely spot. The first Duke of Newcastle had been the chief defender of Yorkshire and the north in the last rebellion against the house of Stuart; the second Duke was intended to fill the same role. Lord Bellasyse, one of the inner *camarilla* of James's most intimate advisers, constantly assured the King that no one whatsoever in all his dominions exceeded Newcastle in loyalty and in interest to serve his Majesty.

The will may have been there in full measure, but the ability seems to have been woefully lacking. At any rate no one could have played a more ineffective part than Duke Henry did in the great events of November, 1688. It is possible that the forces making for the success of the enterprise of William of Orange in the north of England, as elsewhere, would in any event have been too strong for him. His old friend, Danby, had been most assiduously preparing the ground for the Prince in those parts. The Earl, though his designs were directed against the government which Newcastle was defending, still maintained friendly relations with him, paid him a visit, and 'made very merry with him upon several steps of his proceedings'. But the Duke resented Danby's visit, feeling that the latter came to pose ostentatiously as his counsellor.[1] He himself, however, shewed no enterprise or initiative, and if James was relying much upon him for the preservation of the loyalty of the north, he was trusting to a broken reed. Newcastle made a proffer of his services in the south, where the King's principal forces lay, but was told that the King had need of him in his own part of the country, and he was on 3 October

[1] *Reresby's Memoirs*, p. 517.

commissioned to raise a regiment of foot to assist in its defence.[1] Later on, he was instructed to take measures for the holding of Scarborough Castle, as a precaution in the event of the possible landing at Bridlington Bay.[2] Rumour, at any rate, had it that the Duke succeeded in seizing some five hundred horses belonging to the Earl of Wiltshire, which were intended to be used in the interests of the Prince of Orange.[3] But Newcastle himself, after having stayed some time in York, keeping a great table there and spending £100 a week, departed on 30 October,[4] and remained inactive at Welbeck, apparently judging that the invasion danger was sufficiently remote to allow of his remaining at home, or else that he was as well placed in Nottinghamshire for fulfilling his duties as he would be further north. This was not the opinion of the energetic Sir John Reresby, the Governor of York. He considered that the Duke as Lord-lieutenant of all three Yorkshire ridings ought to remain in that county. All the deputy lieutenants were in York itself, and there was a suggestion that a meeting should be held on 22 November to adopt a formal resolution of loyalty to the King. Reresby was particularly anxious that Newcastle should be present on this occasion. But already before that date the King's cause had begun to falter, if not to totter. William of Orange had landed at Torbay on 5 November. There is no doubt that he was disappointed at not finding an immediate response, for the instigators of his coming had assured him that he would find overwhelming support in the country. But the delay proved to be brief. The army, which was to repel the invaders, was ordered to concentrate at Salisbury. Before

[1] Narcissus Luttrell, *Brief Historical Narration of State Affairs* (6 vols., Oxford, 1857), vol. i, pp. 464-5.

[2] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 160.

[3] H.M.C., *Le Fleming MSS.*, p. 214.

[4] *Reresby's Memoirs*, p. 524.

the King could arrive there in person—which he did not do until the 19th—Lord Cornbury, the eldest son of the second Earl of Clarendon, had started a movement of disaffection in that army itself. On 16 November Lord Delamere roused his Cheshire tenants on behalf of the Prince, and made his way to Manchester. Preparations were also afoot for the seizing of York.[1]

It was Newcastle's business to thwart the latter project. But there had been prevision and enterprise on the one side, none on the other. Danby and the Prince's adherents were prepared to make use for their own designs of the meeting of Yorkshire gentry and freeholders summoned for the 22nd, and one of the deputy lieutenants, Sir Henry Goodrick, was determined to produce at the meeting a motion in favour of a free Parliament, which would be in effect a declaration for the Prince of Orange. Reresby had at his disposal in York a small garrison of regular troops, but a number of militia were also brought into the city, ostensibly at all events to preserve the public peace, in anticipation of the forthcoming meeting, and in view of the excited condition of the country. Such was the situation in York when Newcastle arrived there on the 19th. Apparently he was quite unprepared to deal with an emergency; at any rate he was much perturbed by the new developments with which he found he had to cope. He informed Reresby that there were far too many militiamen in the town, and he asked his deputies if there was anything more in the wind than the simple declaration of loyalty to the sovereign which he had been informed was to be made three days hence. When Goodrick avowed his design to petition for a free Parliament, all that the Duke did was to declare that 'he would not stay to be affronted or overruled by his deputies'; but that he would return the next day. Reresby opposed this pusillanimous step 'extremely', pointing out

[1] For Danby's proceedings see H.M.C., *Lindsey MSS.*, pp. 449-56.

that it was 'fit his Grace should be here at a time of such difficulty'. But neither to this remonstrance nor to Reresby's further suggestion that the troops, whose loyalty he himself suspected, should be dismissed, would he yield.[1] A certain Jeremy Mahoney, who arrived in York a few hours after the Duke left, wrote:

> 'The reason of the sudden departure of his Grace was that all the militia of the contrey came to towne without orders, and theire confounded ringleaders had the impudence to speake to his Grace for joyning with them for a free Parliament; and thereupon his Grace went away in the greatest pet and discontentment of the world.'[2]

In other words, Newcastle threw up the sponge before the contest had even started. That his retirement from York was due simply and solely to high dudgeon at finding his authority defied by his subordinates is incredible. Wounded vanity may well have had something to do with it, but it is more probable that he came to the instant conclusion that already the game was up.

Whatever his motives, his conduct was extremely pusillanimous. Danby, it has been said, was lucky in the man he had to circumvent, for a schoolboy could have gulled 'the pettish Newcastle'.[3] What happened on 22 November was that during the freeholders' meeting a panic cry was raised that Papists were massacring Protestants in the town. The meeting broke up in alarm, and there was a good deal of confusion as the result of this ridiculous story. At this highly propitious moment for himself and his schemes, the Earl of Danby appeared at the head of an escort of horsemen, and called upon the support of the militia for a free Parliament and the Protestant religion. The militia responded to a man. The garrison troops were

[1] *Reresby's Memoirs*, pp. 527-8.
[2] H.M.C., *Leeds MSS.*, p. 26.
[3] Feiling, *op. cit.*, pp. 234-5.

easily overcome and Reresby was placed under arrest. York now stood solidly for the Prince of Orange.[1] Newcastle sent orders to his captains of horse that they should dismiss the militia, but they laughed at this belated message.[2] A party was sent from York to Welbeck to seize the Duke's horses and arms, but he himself was not molested.[3] Lord Dunblane brought the arms seized at Welbeck into Doncaster.[4] With equal ease Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, in each of which the Duke of Newcastle had a powerful interest, were secured for the Prince by the prompt action of the Earl of Devonshire. The town of Nottingham indeed became the very centre of resistance to the King in the Midlands and north. Hither repaired the Earls of Manchester, Stamford, Chesterfield, and Rutland, and other influential noblemen; hither, at the instigation of the Churchills, and conducted by Compton, the Bishop of London, came the Princess Anne herself, to shew that even his own family had turned against the King. How signal a contrast with the days of 1640, when the loyal influence of a Newcastle had been such that whole armies had been raised for the King, and it had been recognised that the prospects of the King's enemies in Nottinghamshire were utterly hopeless!

After this we hear very little of the Duke of Newcastle. Once more an owner of Welbeck was on the losing side; but in the last case the loser had distinguished himself in resistance; this time the part he played was ignominious. In simple justice it ought to be added that the circumstances were utterly different. In 1640 the country was deeply divided; there was a complete conflict of wills and of political and religious beliefs. In 1688 there was no such cleavage. Few save the Roman Catholic minority and his

[1] *Reresby's Memoirs*, pp. 528-33. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 533.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 536.
[4] H.M.C., *Le Fleming MSS.*, p. 227; *Reresby's Memoirs*, p. 587.

Henry Cavendish, Earl of Ogle, 1663–80
from a painting by M. Beale after Lely

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immediate following felt any love for James II, or considered that their interests were in any way bound up with his. No one from the King himself downward played a very manly part on the Stuart side; and if Newcastle's conduct was feeble and faint-hearted it was certainly no worse than that of James himself. On 11 December James II made his first, unsuccessful, flight from his own capital; on the 22nd he escaped from Rochester to France. On 13 February, 1688/9, William and Mary were proclaimed King and Queen of England. Newcastle remained 'very loyall and firm to his master', reviling the Earls of Danby and Devonshire who had contributed so largely to the success of the Prince's *coup*, and refused to attend the Convention which undertook the settlement of the succession.[1] He resigned all his appointments, refusing to take the oaths to the new sovereigns,[2] and lived henceforth in retirement at Welbeck. If he had not supported the new King when he entered the country of his adoption, at any rate he had in no way incommoded him: he was left in peace. He did not long survive the Revolution, dying at the age of sixty-one at Welbeck on 26 July, 1691,[3] when all his honours died with him, except the barony of Ogle, which fell into abeyance among his daughters.

We have seen that the first Duke had been passionately desirous to have sons, but of those he had by his first wife only one survived him, and his second wife had no children at all. The second Duke was even more unfortunate. The first two sons born to him died in infancy—indeed the first lived only an hour, and the second only eighteen days. The third, Henry, lived eighteen years, from 19 January, 1662, to 1 November, 1680. His birth had been hailed by his father with great delight, and there were great hopes of

[1] *Reresby's Memoirs*, pp. 544-5; *Le Fleming MSS.*, p. 243.

[2] *C.S.P.D., 1689-90*, p. 528, from a news-letter of 27 March, 1690.

[3] He was buried in Bolsover Church.

his carrying on the family name and dignities, and of his adding considerably to its fortune.

In 1670, when Henry was seven, there died Jocelyn Percy, eleventh Earl of Northumberland, leaving only a small daughter to inherit the barony of Percy and the great estates belonging to her house. In the following year Henry's grandfather jumped at the opportunity of combining two great titles and two great properties. He wrote to the Dowager Countess of Northumberland proposing an alliance between little Viscount Mansfield, described as below the normal height for his age but of a 'quick and ready understanding',[1] and her grand-daughter, who was more than a year Henry's junior. The Dowager replied:

> 'I have received your Lordship's letter full of obliging expressions to our family which I am very sensible of, and for the offer you are pleased to make of your grandson. I can only say I have no present exceptions to make against so noble an alliance, but that it is too early days to think of disposing of my grandchild, whose tender years are not yet capable of distinguishing what may most conduce to her future happiness. And when she is of age to judge I must be so just as to give her the choice of all those who shall then offer themselves, and possibly none may be more acceptable to her than this young Lord.'[2]

So, apparently, matters were allowed to rest for some years, but definite arrangements for a marriage between Henry Cavendish and Betty Percy must have been made during the lifetime of the first Duke of Newcastle, since

[1] On the other hand Dorothy, Countess of Sunderland (Waller's 'Sacharissa') described him as 'the saddest creature . . . as ugly as anything young can be'. Brit. Mus., Add. MS. 32680, f. 296; *G.E.C.* (new ed.), vol. ix, p. 528 *n.*

[2] H.M.C., *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, pp. 149, 152.

Elizabeth (Percy) Cavendish, Countess of Ogle,
1667–1722
from a painting by M. Beale after Lely

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after his son's untimely death we find the second Duke writing bitterly about it and speaking of 'my Sonn who was ruened by his Marriage w^ch^ I was ever against'.[1] In February, 1678, there was a wild rumour that the boy, since his grandfather's death styled Earl of Ogle, and Lady Percy had already been secretly married.[2] A little more than a year after this report—on 27 March, 1679—the wedding did take place, the bridegroom being sixteen and the bride but fourteen. The agreements come to between the two families regarding the properties involved (which incidentally included the settlement upon Lord Ogle of lands to the value of £10,000 out of the Percy estates) and the marriage settlement were to have been confirmed by a private Act of Parliament, and such a Bill was actually introduced into the House of Lords on 9 May, 1679.[3] For some reason or other it was not proceeded with any further. As events proved, it did not matter, for on 1 November in the following year the young husband died of fever.[4]

The second Duke of Newcastle had five daughters, all of whom survived him—Elizabeth, born in 1654; Frances, in 1660; Margaret, a year later; Katherine, in 1665; and Arabella in 1673.

[1] Strong, *Letters at Welbeck*, p. 61.

[2] H.M.C., *Rutland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 46.

[3] H.M.C., *House of Lords MSS., 1678-88*, p. 142.

[4] Her grandmother subsequently arranged a marriage for Betty Percy with a wealthy *roué*, Thomas Thynne of Longleat, from whom she ran away. A sequel to this was Thynne's attempt to murder Count Königsmark, who had been a suitor for the lady's hand, followed by the fatal wounding of Thynne by three Germans presumed to have been hired by Königsmark. These three men were tried and condemned to death; Königsmark himself was acquitted. Betty Percy eventually, being still a child of fifteen, married the 'proud' Duke of Somerset.

See H.M.C., *Rutland MSS.*, vol. ii, pp. 58-60, 67, 69, 71, 74; *Ormonde MSS.*, n.s., vol. vi, pp. 107, 223, 229, 313-15, 319-20, 328-30; N. Luttrell, *Brief Historical Relation*, vol. i, pp. 144, 163-70; *State Trials* (33 vols, 1809-28), vol. ix, pp. 1 *et seq.*

The eldest in 1669 married Christopher Monck, the second Duke of Albemarle. Even when quite a young girl she had shewn herself at least eccentric, and in later life she became known as 'the mad Duchess'. Her father, writing in 1683, while denying that she is mad, speaks of there being 'a great consternation upon her, I sopose caused by her own folly and pride'.[1] Extraordinary stories were told of her at this time of her life, and when a second Duke——the Duke of Montagu—sought her hand in marriage, it could only be supposed that he wanted, not her, but her money. The marriage, however, took place, and thereafter the lady was rarely seen in public: whereupon rumour had it she was being kept in close confinement.[1] It is possible that she had become so demented that it was the only thing to do with her.[2] Upon the death of the Duke of Montagu in March, 1709, there were great disputes as to who should have the custody of his widow. Much discussed and much fought over, the mad Duchess survived her second husband for many years.[3]

The finding of suitable husbands for the other daughters proved a matter of some difficulty. As early as 1675 the father, at that date Earl of Ogle, was consulting with the grandfather as to the possibility of Lord Lexington taking one of them. The first Duke was in favour of the suggestion, provided that a portion of £3,000 was forthcoming should

[1] See H.M.C., Report xi, app. 7, *Leeds MSS.*, p. 22; *Memoirs of the Verney Family* (ed. 1928, 2 vols.), vol. ii, p. 295.

[2] Reresby, hearing the news that the Duchess was 'gone distracted', went to Welbeck to condole with the Duke and found him 'very sensibly afflicted'. Subsequently, however, the Duke declared that his daughter was only pretending to be mad as a convenient explanation of her having received a love-letter which she had concealed and which her husband had discovered. *Reresby's Memoirs*, pp. 284, 301.

[3] See, for example, the stories in *The Wentworth Papers* (ed. J. J. Cartwright, 1883), pp. 79-80 and *n.*; letter from Peter Wentworth, 15 March, 1708/9, and news-letters of 15-26 March and 22 March–2 April, 1708/9.

Lady Elizabeth Cavendish, Duchess of Albemarle
and later of Montagu, 1655–1734
from a painting by T. Murrey

friend Newcastle remarked that he had a high esteem for Lord Thanet, and that an alliance with him would be very pleasing, but he would prefer Margaret to be married before her younger sister. He added very significantly, as events turned out, that while Margaret and Katherine were equally dear to him, if he made any difference between them, the advantage would be Margaret's. He would give her more now, and much more hereafter. In another letter he did not make the pretence that the two were equally dear, but admitted plainly that Margaret had always been her father's and mother's favourite.[1] He still hoped that Lord Thanet would change his mind. However, Thanet did not, and on 28 August, 1684, the marriage between him and Katherine Cavendish took place. That day the bride and bridegroom were met on Stainmore Common by fifteen hundred horsemen, who escorted them on their way to Appleby, and thirty guineas were distributed to the Earl's tenants near Brough to drink the King's health, a toast which was no doubt followed by that of their Lord and his lady.[2]

The finding of a suitable husband for the Duke's favourite daughter Margaret occasioned 'a great disorder in the family', and for a time the Duke and Duchess 'were parted from bed and board'. The Duchess wanted her to marry Charles Talbot, Earl, and afterwards Duke of Shrewsbury, with a portion greater than the Duke was disposed to allow her. The father was inclined to arrange for her marriage to James II's natural son by Arabella Churchill, the Duke of Berwick. The Duchess was resolved that her daughter should not wed a papist and a bastard. The Duchess was very obstinate, for she 'had soe great a share of government in that family that she expected that every thing should goe as she pleased'. Another suitor was Louis de

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 157.

[2] H.M.C., *Le Fleming MSS.*, p. 402.

Duras, the Earl of Feversham, nephew of the great Turenne, and the victor of the battle of Sedgemoor. Of his suit we have full particulars from Reresby, who acted as a go-between throughout the protracted negotiations. King James approved the proposal, and at first Newcastle's only objection to it was that Feversham had not sufficient property in land. As the Duke and the Duchess were still unreconciled, the discussions of this proposed match, which began in the summer of 1686 and were still in progress eighteen months later, were far from smooth. The Duke refused to give his consent unless the Duchess gave hers previously *in writing*. Although Feversham had an income of £8,000 a year, the absence of any considerable amount of landed property was still regarded as a serious obstacle, apart from his being a Frenchman. The Earl on his side regarded the proposed dowry of £15,000 as inadequate, and suggested that the Duke should settle a part of his estates upon husband, wife, and heirs, to which condition Newcastle would not agree. Eventually, in October, 1687, Reresby, who worked assiduously on Feversham's behalf, persuaded the Duchess to give her consent in writing. This he conveyed to the Duke, 'who when he saw it flew into a passion, saying he never thought his wife such a fool as to doe it; that this was to beggar his daughter; that she was lost for ever'; but that he would give his consent all the same, though he would refuse to give her in marriage, and when Feversham came to claim her he would absent himself from Welbeck. Reresby, though knowing the Duke to be 'an unsteady, fickle man', was 'amazed at this transport'; but he was unable to deflect him from his purpose. They parted in anger. The Duke subsequently visited his wife and violently upbraided her and Margaret. The result was that the latter declared flatly that she was determined to remain single until her father and mother could really agree on a husband for her.[1] It was

[1] *Reresby's Memoirs*, pp. 425, 457-61, 464, 471-5.

not until February, 1690, that Margaret found a husband in John Holles, Earl of Clare. They were first cousins, his mother being Grace Pierrepont, Newcastle's sister-in-law. This, from the point of view of the historian of Welbeck, was much the most important of these marriages. The youngest daughter, Arabella—eleven and a half years Margaret's junior—was not married during her father's lifetime. She married Charles Spencer, third Earl of Sunderland, in January, 1695.[1] This might have been an alliance of importance, for Sunderland became a statesman of great influence under Anne and George I, had it not been that Arabella died of smallpox only three years after her marriage.

Immediately after Newcastle's death, the significance of his remarks about giving a preference to his daughter Margaret became apparent. He had felt little affection for the eldest, Elizabeth, whom her parents evidently regarded as not only queer but undutiful. Lady Glenorchy had died in 1690. An equal division of the great properties of the Duke among the three remaining daughters might reasonably have been expected. But for some reason or other the Duke had latterly become prejudiced against Lady Thanet, who apparently complained (rightly, in her mother's opinion) of her father's unreasonableness and injustice to her,[2] and it seems likely that he had never forgiven her husband for choosing her in preference to Margaret, or Katherine for allowing herself to be so chosen. The young, and as yet unmarried, Arabella was not considered. The Duke was evidently determined to keep the great bulk of his estates united. There was a report that one method of doing so, in the event of a failure of heirs male, had already been agreed upon—that the heads of the two houses of Cavendish had mutually decided that, if such a misfortune

[1] See some correspondence relating to the financial arrangements for this match, *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, pp. 169-70.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 165.

Lady Frances Cavendish, Lady Glenorchy,
1660–91
from a painting by Comer

befell either branch of the family, the estates should pass to the other. It was said that the Earl of Devonshire had made such a settlement of his property.[1] Whether Newcastle ever at any time agreed to, or even thought of, such a solution or not, he did not adopt it. His will, of 26 May, 1691, provided that the Cavendish estate should pass to his daughter Margaret and the heirs of her body on the following strict conditions: first, that the son or daughter to whom the inheritance of the estate should descend must take upon himself, or herself, the name of Cavendish, in honour of the noble and illustrious first Duke of Newcastle; and secondly, that it must be left to only one person, in order that it might remain entire and undivided in the blood, family and name of Cavendish. As the estates of Duke Henry had been encumbered to the extent of £80,000 and upwards, the wealthy Earl of Clare took over the liabilities, including a number of mortgages, and soon after their marriage he and his wife entered into an agreement, executed on 17 January, 1693, whereby (to put it shortly) in return for his acceptance of responsibility for the liabilities of his wife's estates the husband obtained rights over them. The great importance of this instrument, probably not at all appreciated by Margaret at the time, became apparent to her and everyone else concerned after her husband's death.[2]

The publication of this will gave rise to a furious contro-

[1] See H.M.C., *Ormonde MSS.*, vol. v, p. 554. The Earl of Arran writes, 16 Jan., 1681/2, that there is a prospect of the Newcastle estate being divided between the Duke's five daughters, but then Lord Devonshire will feel 'that he has had hard measure, for there was a promise betwixt the two fathers that their paternal estates for want of heirs males should fall to the surviving heir, and my Lord Devonshire is so settled'. According to Reresby one result of the quarrel between the Duke and Duchess in 1686 was that 'he burnt his will, and made another settlement'. *Reresby's Memoirs*, p. 437.

[2] A memorandum among the Welbeck papers, recapitulating the vexed history of the estate, which was the cause of still greater

versy. Lord Thanet was immediately up in arms in defence of the rights of his wife, and he disputed the will. So also did the Duke of Montagu, when he married the Dowager Duchess of Albemarle in September, 1692. The two husbands combined in an attempt to prove that Newcastle had been insane at the time when he made the will. In resisting this attempt the Earl of Clare endeavoured to obtain the assistance of the Earl of Breadalbane, father-in-law of the late Lady Glenorchy. He wrote on 26 August, 1693:

> 'I desire you will speak to your son to let me know what he can say touching the condition of mind he found my Lord Duke in when he last saw him at Welbeck, let it make for or against whom it will, that I may see whether his evidence is so material as to give his Lordship the trouble of a *subpœna* if there should be occasion.
>
> 'That the smallness of your son's portion and the total omission as to future expectations may occasion complaints from you both is not much to be wondered at, yet I hope you cannot blame me for the same who was not in any ways concerned therein; but for me to give any

trouble a generation later, and which was drawn up upon Margaret's death, gives a brief summary:

'26 May 1691 By will Hen. late D. of Newcastle devises the Cavendish Estate to Marg^{t} late Dut. of N. and y^{e} heirs of her body Prov^{d} and wth strict charge y^{e} issue of her body whether Son or Daughter to whom she sh^{d} settle or dispose it ⟨and willed it should be onely to one yt it might remain entire and undevided⟩ sh^{d} take upon him or her y^{e} name of Cavendish.

'20/21 June 1691 By Ind. of Lease and Release Duke Hen. settles this Estate on Dut. Marg^{t} and her heirs (subject to paym^{t} of his Debts) he or she to whom ye Inheritance should descend or come from or under her taking upon him or her y^{e} surname of Cavendish.'

See also the 'Case of the respondent Lady Henrietta Holles Cavendish in the case to be heard in the House of Lords', 19 May, 1713, in which the provisions of Duke Henry's will are recapitulated [copy at Welbeck] and *English Reports*, *House of Lords*, vol. i (Brown's Reports), pp. 1433-6, where the essential facts are stated.

Lady Catherine Cavendish, Countess of Thanet,
1656–1712
from a miniature

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hopes of doing anything upon that consideration must needs be interpreted to my future prejudice.'[1]

Further negotiations were carried on between Clare and Breadalbane through an anonymous intermediary, as they were neither of them any longer willing to discuss the matter directly. It is plain that Breadalbane, who was of a grasping nature, as we know from other sources, felt that his son's evidence was worth money; clear also that Clare was disposed to buy it. At all events in November, 1693, the intermediary was instructed to let the Earl of Breadalbane know

'that whereas the L^{d} Glenorchy had said in divers places already, that he had been with the Duke of Newcastle a little before his death, and that he found him of sound Judgment and memory, and that he intended not to divide his Estate but to leave it to his daughter Clare: If that were true his Lordship had said so, and that he would set under his hand what discourse the said L^{d} Glenorchy had had, with the said Duke of Newcastle on the subject, he the said Earle of Clare would oblige him self upon his Honour that he would pay to the said L^{d} Glenorchy 2000 £ in addition to what he had already received in portion, with the said Lady Francis within the space of three years, from the said November 1693 or at any time sooner, when ever the suits should be finally determined, before the 3 years which were then depending, betwixt the said Earl of Clare, and the Earls of Thanet and Montagu.'

Many conferences took place between the intermediary and the two lords, as the result of which Lord Glenorchy gave to the intermediary a letter dated 9 November, 1693, containing the evidence required, which the Earl of Clare acknowledged to be to his satisfaction. Lord Clare, on his side, gave an engagement to the intermediary on his honour that he would pay to Lord Glenorchy £2,000 in

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 167.

three years' time or at the termination of the litigation, if that occurred earlier. In order, no doubt, that the parties to the transaction might be able to say that they had not struck a financial bargain with one another, the letter was deposited with the intermediary, not handed over to the Earl of Clare, and the latter's undertaking with regard to the £2,000 was given to the intermediary, not directly either to the Earl of Breadalbane or to Lord Glenorchy.[1]

The attempt made by the Duke of Montagu and the Earl of Thanet in the Court of Chancery to invalidate the Duke of Newcastle's will entirely failed. After a four days' hearing of a bill exhibited by Thanet and his wife to set aside the will, and of a cross bill exhibited by the Earl of Clare and his wife, Lord Somers, the Lord Chancellor, and the other judges sitting with him unanimously gave their judgment in favour of the latter.[2] But the dispute involved the Earl of Clare in a great deal of trouble, and it also involved him in a duel with Lord Thanet, fought in Lincoln's Inn Fields, in which both combatants were wounded, but separated before they could do one another further injury. The prize for which the claimants contended was of great value, and it is not surprising that the struggle was fierce, more especially as the bestowal of the whole great inheritance upon one of the four surviving daughters, and that not the eldest of them, must have seemed, at any rate to the other interested parties, an arbitrary and partial proceeding. When the Earl of Clare succeeded to all the Holles estates and also enjoyed, through his wife, the use of those that belonged to the Dukes of Newcastle, he became the richest man in England.

[1] The anonymous paper in the Welbeck Abbey archives from which these particulars are taken is endorsed, 'Coppy of the Transactions betwixt ye Earle of Breadalbane and Earle of Clare in Nov^br, Dec^br, and January, 1693.'

[2] See recapitulation of the facts in the 'Case of Lady Henrietta Cavendish Holles' referred to in note *supra*.

Chapter XI

THE HOUSE OF HOLLES AND JOHN HOLLES, DUKE OF NEWCASTLE

The Earl of Clare, who became through his wife, Margaret Cavendish, the new owner of Welbeck upon the failure of the male line, belonged to a distinguished family. Gervase Holles, the antiquary, who in 1658 wrote its history in a work entitled *Parentela et Parentalia Hollesiorum*, said,

> 'I must ingenuously withall acknowledge that (like the river Arethusa) we have run some time as it were under the ground in obscurity untill Sir William Holles the father (through God's blessing upon his industry and providence) layd the foundation and groundworke for that greatnes our family is now arrived at; who if he were not the rayser of our house, I am sure was the restorer of it. And to his memory (next under God's mercy) we ow the just acknowledgment of what honours or fortunes any of us now possess.'[1]

This same William Holles (born about 1471) came of quite humble parentage, being the son of a baker in the

[1] *Memoirs of the Holles Family*, by Gervase Holles (ed. A. C. Wood, 1937), pp. 11-12; Collins, *op. cit.*, pp. 53-4. The complete manuscript of this work is in the possession of the Marquess of Bath. Another, incomplete, is at Welbeck. Considerable portions are printed in Collins' *Noble Families*. For Gervase Holles see an article by R. W. Goulding in *Transactions of the Thoroton Society*, vol. xxvi (1922), pp. 36-70. There is a paper by A. C. Wood on the Holles Family, with a pedigree of the earlier members of the family, in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (1936), pp. 144-65.

city of London. Gervase, with an honest spirit not always found in genealogists, observes: 'Certainly I would not scrape a chimney-sweeper out of my pedigree, that conveyed me my being.' William prospered, becoming a member of the Mercers' Company in 1499, and in 1538 Master of the Guild. He also achieved municipal distinction, for he was an alderman and sheriff, and in 1539 Lord Mayor, of London. Henry VIII conferred a knighthood upon him in 1533. He died in 1542. His elder son, Thomas, ran through a large fortune, and perished wretchedly in prison; but the younger, also named William, was a prudent man, who throve as his father had done, acquiring large estates in several counties, was noted for the fine hospitality he dispensed at the manor of Haughton in Nottinghamshire, which he had inherited, and for the charm of character which earned for him the name of 'good Sir William Holles'. He died at the age of eighty-three in the year 1591. He married twice; and by his first wife, Anne Denzil, had a son named Denzil, who was the ancestor of the Earls of Clare, and a second son, Gervase, who married Frances Frescheville of Staveley, and was the grandfather of the antiquary.[1]

Denzil's son John had an adventurous career—for he fought against the Turks in Hungary and against Spain, both in the Armada battle and later under the Earl of Essex. He married a sister of Lord Sheffield and was for a time in high favour at Court, where in 1610 he was appointed controller of the household of Henry, Prince of Wales. But all was not smooth sailing for him. He aroused the enmity of Gilbert, Earl of Shrewsbury, and, for some reason or other, after the death of Prince Henry his fortunes suffered a temporary eclipse, and on very trivial grounds he was haled before the Court of Star

[1] See *Memorials of the Holles Family*, pp. 9-47; Collins, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-74; A. C. Wood's article cited *supra*, pp. 151-4.

Chamber.[1] However, he succeeded in winning the goodwill of the Duke of Buckingham, and with his connivance he obtained a peerage as Baron Haughton in 1616. The sale of honours was rife under James I, and, as Gervase Holles said, scarcely any one during the period when Buckingham was all-powerful procured any advancement (unless perchance he was connected with the favourite, either by family or by marriage) without paying a round sum for it. In this case the purchase price paid to Buckingham was £10,000. The new baron strongly denounced this practice of 'temporal simony', but excused his own use of it on the ground that as merit was no path to honour, and persons who had no better claim than himself were leaping over his head by means of their money; so, as his own purse was not unfurnished, he saw no reason why he should not use it for the same purpose. Eight years after, for a further £5,000, Lord Haughton purchased advancement to an earldom, his patent being dated 2 November, 1625. It is remarkable that he was permitted to take the title of Clare (or Clarence), which had hitherto been reserved for princes of the blood.[2] In the following year, Buckingham was impeached by the House of Commons.[3] Clare had made use of him, but he disapproved of the Duke of Buckingham, as well as of the 'temporal simony' which he initiated. The Earl, we are told, was

> 'a tender Lover of the lawes and liberties of England; and the Duke had been charged in Parliament with

[1] Collins, *op. cit.*, pp. 78-86; *Memorials of the Holles Family*, pp. 88-99.

[2] *Memorials of the Holles Family*, pp. 99-106; Collins, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-9.

[3] Clare distinguished himself in this year by refusing, in company with Lord Essex, Lord Saye, and several other peers, to pay the forced loan demanded by Charles I. See S. R. Gardiner, *History of England, 1602-1642*, vol. vi, p. 150; *Memorials of the Holles Family*, p. 103.

> many transcendant misdemeanours. All, or the greater part of the whole charge, the Earle knew to be true . . . wch made him beholde the Duke as a prodigious comet wch threatened mischiefe and ruine to the worlde below him. . . .'

Clare, who supervised the education of his cousin Gervase for a space of over three years, won the latter's intense appreciation. He admired his fine and dignified presence and his excellent horsemanship; 'but his minde was yet the far nobler part, wch was adorned wth all the ornaments the University, Innes of Court, Court, camp, travayle, and language could enrich him with'. He speaks also of his eloquence, his extraordinary kindness and courtesy, his virtues as a husband and as a father, and his 'felicity of conversation beyond all other men', so that his table was 'in effect, a continual *Convivium Philosophale*'.[1]

Clare's eldest son, also named John, succeeded him in the earldom on his death on 4 October, 1637. Born at Haughton on 13 June, 1595, he had been a member of Parliament, first for East Grinstead, then for the Cornish borough of St. Michael under James I, and again for East Grinstead under Charles I. We are told by the historian of the family,

> 'his Lordship, by Education, Observation, and Temper was led to ask no Favours of the Court, yet had a Reverence for the King; and, when he found all Grievances thoroughly remedied, was well satisfied; and from the first Meeting of the Parliament, in 1641, never concurred in any Invasions on the Royal Power'.[2]

In that same year he became Lord-lieutenant of Nottinghamshire. In 1642, being out of sympathy with the

[1] *Memorials of the Holles Family*, pp. 111-12; Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 96. A. C. Wood in the article already quoted describes the first Earl of Clare as one who 'walked all his life upon the verge of greatness without ever crossing the magic line'.

[2] Collins, *op. cit.*, pp. 164-5.

proceedings of the Parliament, he was among those peers who waited on the King at York, and who engaged themselves not to obey any orders whatsoever not warranted by the laws of the land, and to defend his Majesty's person, together with his Crown and Prerogatives, against all persons whatsoever. Next year he concerted with Lords Essex, Bedford, and Holland, and several other members of the Upper House still sitting at Westminster, in an abortive attempt to bring about a cessation of hostilities by accommodation. Upon the failure of this effort he made his way to Oxford, where the Court was established, and made an offer of his services to the King. To prove his loyalty he fought in the battle of Newbury on 10 September, 1643, but his reception was rather frigid.[1] It seems evident that Clare was essentially a moderate with no heart in the war, whose one desire was to live at peace. At any rate, he and Bedford, with whom he had been acting in concert, before the end of the year made their peace with Parliament. He took no further part in hostilities, living quietly, first at Haughton, then in London. Nevertheless, Parliament decided to sequester his estates—a decision reversed after the battle of Marston Moor. In the previous April he, again supported by Bedford, had taken the Covenant. He thus acquiesced in the *force majeure* of the Parliamentary party, whose principles he did not approve. It was a relief to him when measures were taken to bring about the restoration of Charles II. But he lived as much retired from public affairs in the years after the Restoration as in those preceding it, and he died on 7 January, 1665.[2]

Much the most important part played by any member of the Holles family in English history was that taken by the younger brother of the second Earl of Clare—the celebrated

[1] See C. H. Firth, *The House of Lords during the Civil War* (1910), pp. 135-6.

[2] Collins, *op. cit.*, pp. 166-8.

Denzil Holles, who, having started as a strong partisan, became an apostle of conciliation. He is famous for his rigorous criticisms of Charles I's methods of government, in conjunction with Thomas Wentworth; for being one of those who on 2 March, 1629, held the speaker in his chair while the House of Commons adopted the three resolutions on Popery and Arminianism, and tunnage and poundage. Together with Eliot and eight others he was arrested by the King's command, and ordered by the Court of King's Bench to pay 1,000 marks. He was one of the five members whom Charles I determined to impeach for high treason, and whom he attempted to arrest in person at Westminster on 4 January, 1642. When, the Civil War being imminent, Holles was appointed, with Pym and Hampden and others, a member of the Committee of Safety, at his own expense he proceeded to raise a regiment on Parliament's behalf. But soon after hostilities had begun he became, like his brother, an advocate of appeasement, and after the second battle of Newbury he acted with the Earl of Manchester in favour of negotiation, as against Cromwell and others who urged a more efficient military organisation for the sake of winning decisive victory. He became much more vehement in his detestation of Cromwell and the army leaders than ever he had been of Charles I. He described them as 'blood-suckers', who were determined to make the land an Aceldama, to ruin the nobility and gentry, and, under the guise of religious zeal, to pursue a selfish ambition for power, as a mean collection of brewers, tailors, shoemakers, 'a notable dunghill', intent on treading underfoot all lawful government, whether royal or Parliamentary, 'so that we may take up the Psalmist's complaint, That the very Foundations are destroyed, and what then can the righteous do?'[1] In 1647 he was driven out of Parliament, together with ten other

[1] '*Memoirs of Denzil, Lord Holles, Baron of Ifield in Sussex from the year 1641 to 1648*' in Masères' *Tracts*, pp. 262-75, 278, 307.

From a painting attributed to J. Huysmans

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members specially obnoxious to them, by the leaders of the Army. Regarding himself as a martyr for constitutional government, Denzil went abroad and, like his brother John, henceforth prayed for the restoration of monarchy. Long ere this he and his sympathisers had become anxious

> 'to submit again to the King's Sceptre of Peace, more willingly than ever they resisted his Force and Power . . . though he, perhaps, looked on them as his greatest enemies. But they considered him as their Prince whom Nature, Duty, the Command of God, and the Laws of Men, obliged them to reverence, and to love as the Head and Father of the People.'[1]

When the Restoration was imminent and a new Council of State was set up in the spring of 1660, Denzil Holles was appointed to it, together with such supporters of the return of Charles II as Ashley Cooper and Sir Harbottle Grimston; and when after the Restoration was accomplished a commission was appointed for the trial of the regicides, Holles was made a member of it. In 1661 the man whom Charles I had regarded as one of his greatest enemies was raised by his son to the peerage as Lord Holles of Ifield. Nevertheless, the part he had played in the Long Parliament was never wholly forgotten; the attitude of the Court towards him was not unnaturally lukewarm, and it was the elder branch of the Holles family, which had distinguished itself less on behalf of the exiled Charles II but had refrained from troubling Charles I, that prospered exceedingly after the Restoration.[2]

Of Gilbert, the third Earl of Clare, little need be said. Born in 1633, he was sent upon a continental tour in 1645, when the Civil War was at its height. We are told that he

[1] *Memoirs of Denzil Holles* in Masères' *Tracts*, p. 193.

[2] The editor of Denzil Holles's *Memoirs*, which were posthumously published in 1699, dedicated them to the Duke of Newcastle.

was of a sober and prudent disposition. His father's death brought him a great estate, and he

> 'followed his example of improving it without neglecting his Attendance on the Public Affairs of the Nation; but, coveting no Preferment, he feared not the Frown of a Court Party, and stoutly opposed all Measures he thought injurious to his Country.'[1]

Thus he was one of those peers who petitioned for the summoning of a Parliament in 1681. When William of Orange landed, he subscribed a petition to the King, praying him to call a free Parliament, which was also signed by Sancroft, Halifax, Ormonde, and others, who still hoped to preserve the Stuart dynasty by inducing the King to make concessions to public sentiment. Gilbert did not live long enough to see the new *régime* inaugurated: he died on 16 January, 1689, in his fifty-fifth year.

His eldest son, being then a young man of twenty-seven, having been born on 9 January, 1662, succeeded to the earldom of Clare and to the great Holles inheritance. Two of his daughters made marriages which are of some importance in the history of Welbeck. The eldest, Elizabeth, married Christopher Vane, Lord Barnard. This connection was to cause a future occupant of Welbeck—Edward Harley, second Earl of Oxford—an infinite amount of trouble, as we shall see. The fourth and youngest daughter, Grace, married Sir Thomas Pelham, baronet, who later became a baron and was the father of Thomas, the famous Duke of Newcastle of the eighteenth century, and of Henry Pelham, the prime minister. This marriage also produced consequences which caused Edward Harley an infinite amount of trouble.

John Holles, the fourth Earl of Clare, 'having all the ad-

[1] Collins, *op. cit.*, pp. 169-174.

John Holles, Duke of Newcastle, 1662–1711
from a miniature by L. Cross

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vantages of Education both at Home and Abroad,[1] so that his behaviour was noble, polite, sprightly and entertaining', as Collins expresses it, was a member of that Convention which met very shortly after his father's death, at the summons of William of Orange, to consider the settlement of the country; and he there both spoke and voted in favour of the Whig theory that James II by his desertion of the country had in effect abdicated, thereby leaving the throne vacant, as against the Tory expedient of presuming him still to be King and appointing a regent.[2] As a very wealthy nobleman, and a supporter of the claims of William and Mary to become joint sovereigns, he early obtained Court favour, and, on 28 March, 1689, he was appointed a Gentleman of the Bedchamber. He also became Lord-lieutenant of Middlesex. At the Coronation he was chosen to carry the Queen's sceptre. On 1 March, 1690, as we have already seen, he married Margaret Cavendish. Collins attributes the second Duke of Newcastle's decision to leave his estates to Lady Clare, at any rate in some degree, to his partiality for his son-in-law, to his appreciation of Clare's 'good Conduct, and noble Behaviour'.[3] However this may be, it would appear that the father-in-law encouraged the Earl in his endeavour to obtain an advancement in the peerage. He himself, always impressed by an inordinate sense of his own importance, was of opinion that his wealth and his support of William in 1689 warranted him in asking for some recognition, and apparently the King gave a promise that something would be done in the future though he could not gratify these pretensions at once.

On the report that several new dukes were to be created,

[1] See the dedication of Dryden's *The Spanish Friar* to him, when he was Lord Haughton. *Works of Dryden*, vol. vi, pp. 373-81. He had sat in the House of Commons for Notts. for a few months before his father's death.

[2] Collins, *op. cit.*, pp. 164-5. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 178.

Clare wrote to the King on 18 April, 1691. He began by saying that Newcastle was 'very importunate' with him, that he should remind his Majesty of his promise that whenever any one was advanced to that dignity he 'should certainly be one'. He had, he said, kept this promise a secret from all but his father-in-law, and so there were not others to speak on his behalf; but he relied upon the King's sacred word and his own consciousness of faithful service to his Majesty, in hoping that this favour would appear reasonable to all but those who were blinded by envy or malice. He again blamed his father-in-law for his own importunacy.

> 'His humours whom I am obliged to gratify, and your Majestie's goodness to me, I begg may in some measure obtain my pardon for this trouble, and the presumption of imploring a line in answer that I may show my Lord Newcastle. This honour would be a perpetual obligation both upon my own and my wive's family.'[1]

The desired favour was still withheld, but, nothing daunted by this second rebuff, Clare made a further bid for the coveted honour on his father-in-law's death, this time arguing that the great title which had been rendered vacant might fittingly be conferred upon him. Collins says:

> 'His lordship had a great Spirit, like the rest of his Ancestors, and would not stoop to make his court or ask a Favour of any of King William's Ministers, which induced him on Sunday, All Saints Day, 1691, to move the King in his Bed-chamber, to bestow on him the Title of Duke of Newcastle, and the Garter',

which had been his father-in-law's.[2] The King again refused his consent to this request, and may well have felt

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 165.
[2] Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

Margaret Cavendishe
Daughter of Henry Duke of Newcastle
Married John Holles Earl of Clare
Afterwards Created Dutchess of Newcastle

Margaret (Cavendish) Holles, Duchess of Newcastle, 1661–1716
from a painting by Comer

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resentful of Clare's persistence. Subsequently the Earl wrote to the King in justification of himself. It was, he said, 'a general received opinion that what honours had been bestowed upon a parent, the heir had the best right to the King's favour'. Feeling, he continued, that he had done nothing to forfeit his Majesty's good opinion, he could only suppose that the King had been told 'false, malitious stories' of him. This cut him to the soul, he declared, being certain that no one had more promoted his Majesty's interests in England, or, he could affirm without vanity, had more power to do so.[1] It is possible that the main argument advanced by Clare in 1691 did not tell in his favour. He affirmed that he had a right to be made Duke of Newcastle as the heir of Duke Henry. It was true that by his father-in-law's will his wife had been left the great inheritance. But there were those who impugned the validity of the will; until the matter had been finally settled there could be no certainty that the Cavendish estates would be combined with those of Holles, and a grant of the dukedom of Newcastle in the meantime might appear like a royal approbation of Clare in his dispute with other claimants.

The Earl took great umbrage when the King refused his request yet again. His self-esteem was deeply wounded; he resigned his place as Gentleman of the Bedchamber, and his posts of Lord-lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum of Middlesex, and retired to Haughton, spending his time in hunting and in the management and improvement of his estate, which towards the end of 1693 was still further augmented by his succeeding to the possessions of Lord Holles of Ifield.[2] Enormously rich as he had been already, this further aggregation of property made him the wealthiest subject in the kingdom. It was no doubt this fact and

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 166.

[2] Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

the failure of the attempts to dislodge him from the Cavendish inheritance that account for his at last obtaining a dukedom in 1694, his patent being dated 30 April.[1] Three other dukedoms were bestowed at the same time—on the Marquess of Carmarthen and the Earls of Bedford and Devonshire. William appears to have thought of making Clare Duke of Clarence, but no one outside the blood royal had ever held this title, and he became, as he had himself proposed, Duke of Newcastle.[2] Other honours followed speedily. On 12 May the new Duke became Lord-lieutenant of Notts. and on 11 August Custos Rotulorum for the same county.[3]

In October, 1695, he had the honour of entertaining the King at Welbeck. William, on his return to England after the most signal triumph of his military career—the capture of Namur, decided to make a progress through the counties of Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire, Lincolnshire and Notts. He was attended by a splendid retinue, including Dr. Sharp, Archbishop of York, the Dukes of Shrewsbury and St. Albans, the Earl of Portland, Lord Godolphin, and Lord Wharton. The resolution to make this expedition before the assembly of Parliament was taken somewhat hurriedly, and when it was decided that the King should include Nottinghamshire in his itinerary, in order to hunt in Sherwood Forest, Newcastle was warned that 'it will be very troublesome to everybody to whose house he goes'. The King arrived at Dunham Ferry, on the confines of the county, in the late afternoon of 30 October, and was there

[1] *C.S.P.D., 1694-5*, pp. 124-5.

[2] The new Duke had a jealous feeling of proprietorship over the title of Clarence. We find him in 1706 writing to Harley to express his satisfaction that, when it had been decided to give an English title to the Electoral Prince of Hanover, the title chosen had been that of Duke of Cambridge, not of Clarence, as had at first been suggested. See H.M.C., *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 198.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 132, 260.

met by the Duke. James Vernon, who was one of the royal escort, wrote on arrival at Welbeck:

> 'We are by what I see in a very pleasant place, and where his Majesty will be splendidly entertained and extraordinarily well diverted, for here is much better stag hunting than was allowed by report, and for shooting there can be no place before it. The house is encompassed with great woods, though the forest be bare enough.'

The entertainment does indeed appear to have been sumptuous; many people of quality in the neighbourhood came to kiss the King's hands, and many tables were provided for the large number of guests who thronged Welbeck during the two days of the royal visit.[1] The Duke's hospitality cost him over £5,000—a large sum for so short a time, even though it is small in comparison with the first Duke's princely expenditure on a similar occasion.[2]

[1] *C.S.P.D., 1695*, p. 91; *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 174.

[2] From the Welbeck Papers:

Oct : 30 : 95

The expence w^{n} y^{e} King was att Wellbeck being 5 dayes

Wine of all sorts	450 : 00 : 00
Strong Ale & strong Bear	280 : 00 : 00
sider small bear	143 : 10 : 00
sweetmeats & frute	254 : 17 : 00
ffish & foule	410 : 05 : 00
Beafe & Mutton	336 : 11 : 09
Venson	200 : 00 : 00
Veale	117 : 00 : 00
Pork & bacon	042 : 13 : 00
Candles of all sorts	191 : 06 : 08
strong watter	057 : 00 : 00
Pigs butter & egs	095 : 00 : 00
Groserys sope &c	279 : 00 : 00
Horses & sadles	200 : 03 : 00
Hay & straw oats beans pease for y^{e} horses	260 : 00 : 00
Bread Corne & other things for y^{e} Baker	292 : 00 : 00
Carrage & servants jurnying	112 : 00 : 00

During the remainder of the reign of William III, we do not hear a great deal of Newcastle's activities. Still further honours came to him. On 30 May, 1698, he was created, and on 7 July he was installed a Knight of the Garter at Windsor. In the following year he became Governor of Hull and also Lord-lieutenant of the East Riding of Yorkshire.[1] Newcastle's immense local influence in consequence of his widely distributed properties made him a power whenever there was a parliamentary election. He was a strength, not only in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, but also in the city of Westminster, where he appears to have

[1] *C.S.P.D.*, *1698*, pp. 277, 338, 341.

Giffts - - - - - - -	260 : 00 : 00
Pewter & y^e^ bill for Tinning - - -	163 : 14 : 7
Glases bottles & Baskitts - - - -	159 : 13 : 4
Broomes & Mops & bruses [*sic*] - - -	017 : 18 : 8
Cole & wood - - - - - -	194 : 19 : 7
Things nesseay for y^e^ stable from y^e^ sadler -	113 : 12 : 6
The smith bill & other workmens bill - -	141 : 09 : 3
other things sent from London - - -	038 : 00 : 0
Things broak & spoyled & boxs &c - -	028 : 11 : 10
Higher of horses & Laborrows - - -	127 : 16 : 00
Garden things baught - - - -	065 : 10 : 00
salt & other things for porrage - - -	031 : 00 : 00
Tunges & Udders - - - - -	012 : 16 : 00
Tea &c; things from Nott: - - - -	025 : 14 : 00
Potted meat - - - - - -	010 : 00 : 00
Damages don to y^e^ ffences & other things -	030 : 00 : 00
	5142 : 02 : 02
What my Lady sent is not in this Papper Came from London by order of my Lady Clare -	0500 : 00 : 00
	5642 : 02 : 2

In addition to the royal visits of James I, Charles I, James II when Duke of York, and William III, already referred to in the text, visits have been paid to Welbeck Abbey by the following reigning sovereigns or by those who later on became reigning Sovereigns:

Edward VII, as Prince of Wales, Nov., 1881, Dec., 1891, Dec., 1897;

held a commanding interest. We find his assistance being solicited more than once by Simon Harcourt, the great Tory lawyer, afterwards Lord Chancellor, by Charles Montagu, afterwards Earl of Halifax, and by Sir Stephen Fox.[1] He acted generally in the Whig interest and was one of those who voted for the acquittal of Lord Somers and Lord Orford when the latter were impeached in the summer of 1700.[2]

The most interesting incident of the Duke's private life during the reign of William III was his providing timber from the great Welbeck oaks for use in the building of St. Paul's by Christopher Wren. These oaks were already famous for their size and strength, and Newcastle's gift of timber for this purpose was esteemed a 'noble benefaction' by the architect.[3] Apparently the Duke conferred a similar

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, pp. 173, 179; H.M.C., *Cowper MSS.*, vol. ii, pp. 415, 417.

[2] *L.J.*, vol. xvi, p. 756; *MSS. of the House of Lords, 1699-1702*, p. 300.

[3] Letter from C. Wren to the Duke of Newcastle's steward, London, 4 April, 1695. MS. copy at Welbeck, printed in R. White's *Dukery Records* (Worksop, 1904), p. 280.

To Mr. Richard Neale,

Steward of His Grace the Duke of Newcastle at Welbeck.

Sir,

Having in my Letter of June 23, 1695, signified to you a particular of all the scantlings of the Timber wee might use in the roofe of St. Paules, that his Grace's noble benefaction might be as usefull as may be to the worke, and understanding that what is

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as King, Sept., 1904, Dec., 1905; George V, as Duke of York, Dec., 1896; as King, Nov., 1912, June, 1914, Oct., 1919, July, 1928; Edward VIII, as Prince of Wales, July, 1923, July, 1928, Feb., 1933; George VI, as Duke of York, Aug., 1929.

Visits have also been paid by the following rulers of foreign states:

Chulalonkorn, King of Siam, August, 1897; Carlos I, King of Portugal, December, 1904; Constantine, Duke of Sparta, later King of the Hellenes, August, 1906; Alfonso XIII, King of Spain, November, 1907; Haakon VII, King of Norway, November, 1913; Emir Faisal, later King of Irak, February, 1921; Leopold III, King of the Belgians, December, 1937.

benefit upon York Minster, for we find the Archbishop of York writing to him in April, 1693, reminding him of a promise to give as many trees out of the park at Welbeck for the fabric of the cathedral at York as he had given for St. Paul's.[1]

During the reign of William III, Newcastle did not hold any political office. Reckoned as a moderate Whig, he took but little share in political controversy. It was generally supposed that the accession of the Princess Anne to the throne would conduce to the advantage of the Tories, if only on account of her strong Anglican sympathies; it was certain that it would lead to the aggrandisement of the Marlboroughs because of their great influence over her. Burnet tells us that the Tories, to show their zeal for the Princess, gave it out that there was a plot to set her aside and bring in the Hanoverian heir to succeed King William

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 166. John, Archbishop of York, to the Earl of Clare at Clerkenwell House, Clerkenwell, 26 April, 1693.

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already designed is none of the Great beams, w^ch^ is what we are most sollicitous for, and being given to understand that wee must expect this season but Ten of the great Trees; I presume once more to acquaint you with the scantlings of the Great Beames to prevent mistake.

47 feet long by 13 inches, and 14 inches at the small end, growing timber, this scantling is to hold die square as near as can be without sap.

Mr. Longland our chief Carpenter will be sent down this season to take care of this concerne, and the timber brought down to Bawtrey whom I desire you to converse with in particulars w^ch^ at this distance I can hardly determine, and beseech you to present with all advantage our utmost sense of his Graces Favour, of w^ch^ also I am very sensible as becomes

Your humble servant

C. Wren.

The present Duke of Portland visited St. Paul's in 1931 during the reconstruction, and asked the Dean for one of the discarded beams from the dome. The request was granted, and from this piece of oak were carved the alms box and part of the pulpit in St. Winifred's, Holbeck, which church was erected by the Duke between 1913 and 1916.

immediately.[1] The bishop treats this as a mere fabrication of the fervent Tory imagination; but it is not easy to brush the tale aside as mere moonshine. Lord Dartmouth asserts positively that there was such an intrigue; that the Dukes of Bolton and Newcastle were its instigators; and that they both tried to win him over, using as their chief argument that allowing the Princess to succeed would simply be to make Marlborough uncrowned King of England.[2] Just a year after the inauguration of the new reign a similar rumour percolated to the Duke of Shrewsbury in his retreat in Rome. A Whig plot had been discovered, he was informed, to dethrone the new Queen, to bring in the Hanoverian Prince, and to marry him to the Duke of Newcastle's daughter, Henrietta.[3] It is difficult to know what to make of what sounds like a mere cock-and-bull story. It is difficult to believe that any sober-minded man could have contemplated so wild a project, and had it not been for Dartmouth's first-hand testimony, it could be dismissed with incredulity. It is conceivable that he, with his anti-Whig animus, chose to exaggerate into the semblance of a plot what was no more than a discussion of the danger of a Marlborough dictatorship when the Princess Anne should come to the throne.[4]

Whether or not Newcastle ever contemplated such a design as has been attributed to him, or even as much as felt

[1] Burnet, *History of My Own Time* (2 vols., folio, 1724-34; 6 vols., Oxford, 1833), vol. ii, p. 299. As the folio pages are given in the margins of the 1833 edition, references to the folio apply to both editions, and are used here.

[2] Note of the Earl of Dartmouth on this same passage.

[3] H.M.C., *Buccleuch MSS.*, vol. ii, pt. 2, p. 766.

[4] It is possibly significant that Newcastle received a letter from the Princess Sophia of Hanover, written on 10 October, 1701, in which she says she has heard from the Earl of Macclesfield of the obligations she is under to him. 'I earnestly begged him to express to you from me how conscious I am of them, and to assure you of the high value I have formed of your merits.' *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 180.

regret when the Princess Anne became Queen of England, he speedily discovered that the intense party antagonisms of her reign had the effect of giving him considerable political influence. With his great rent roll, his immense electoral influence, and his reputation for moderate views, he was courted by all those who feared the domination of the Whig Junto on the one side or of the High Church party on the other. Thus, early in 1704, there began a close connection between Newcastle and Robert Harley, which is important in the history of the period, and very interesting to the historian of Welbeck, since it eventually resulted in the marriage of Henrietta Cavendish-Holles to Edward, Robert Harley's son and heir. Robert Harley's ideal from first to last in his political career—though it sometimes produced odd results in practice—was a system of non-party government, with Ministers inspired in their policies, not by partisan doctrine, but by devotion to the Crown. He saw a statesman of this type in Newcastle, and endeavoured to secure his admission to Godolphin's Administration. He writes to the Duke on 9 May to say that he has had a talk with the Lord Treasurer about Newcastle. There is not a man alive, he says, who has a greater esteem for his Grace than has Lord Godolphin, 'and he said to me that his interests as well as inclination leads him to desire you would come into the Queen's service'. He is resolved, says Harley, 'to make a vacancy, and then to adjust everything else to your service'.[1] In the following spring, on 17 March, 1705, the Duke was appointed Lord Privy Seal in succession to John Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham.[2]

According to Burnet, Newcastle was extremely conscientious in the discharge of the duties of his office, and showed great caution and exactness in matters of routine. The new

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, pp. 184-8.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 189; H.M.C., *Bath MSS.*, vol. i, p. 67, Godolphin to Harley, 1 April, 1705.

Lord Privy Seal would allow nothing to pass without minute examination and discussion.[1] When the very important Regency Act was passed in this year, to which the easy and peaceful accession of George I owed so much in 1714, the Duke became in virtue of his office one of those Lords Justices entrusted with the administration of the affairs of the kingdom in the event of the Queen's death. Though a zealous supporter of Church and State, Newcastle would not give any support to fanatical clamour. He had voted in 1702 against the Tory measure to suppress the practice of occasional conformity by Nonconformists when they wished to qualify for admission to municipal office; and when in October, 1705, the Tories introduced a motion that the Church of England was in danger because of the failure of successive Bills against occasional conformity, he voted against the resolution. Shortly before his death, William III had come to the conclusion that a closer union between England and Scotland was highly desirable. There was no time to do anything during his lifetime; the negotiations, begun shortly after the Queen's accession, were abortive, and a very serious crisis in Anglo-Scottish relations occurred in 1704. It proved that England held the whip hand, however, and the economic measures adopted by the English Parliament, which did a great deal of harm to Scottish trade, were a very effective reprisal for the Scottish Act of Security. The result was that in 1705 there was a new disposition in the northern kingdom to consider proposals for union. The Duke of Newcastle was appointed one of the English commissioners. This time the discussions were fruitful, and the result was the treaty of Union of 1707.[2] He was not one of those to whom the chief credit is due, yet Newcastle's name is inscribed on what has always been regarded as one of the outstanding monuments of British

[1] *History of My Own Time*, vol. ii, p. 568.

[2] D. Defoe, *History of the Union* (1786 ed.), pp. 110, 113, 208.

statesmanship. The treaty was ready for signature on 22 July, 1706, and Newcastle, then at Welbeck, was earnestly requested by Godolphin to come up to London to affix his hand to it.[1]

The Godolphin Ministry, strong and successful as it was, had by no means an easy or unchequered career; and more than one crisis occurred before the Sacheverell trial brought about its downfall. In 1707 Harley's cousin, Abigail Hill, who in that year married the worthy Mr. Masham, was becoming really influential at Court, and a formidable rival to the Duchess of Marlborough. The new favourite was of a much gentler disposition than Sarah Churchill, more subtle in her methods; and as the latter became more of a scold, more domineering and presumptuous, so Anne tended to pay increased attention to the dulcet whisperings of Abigail. Those whisperings were inspired by Harley, who was intent upon destroying the power of the great Whig lords, as it increased with the growing control exerted by Whig finance, which resulted from the prolongation of the war. Harley's mind turned as ever to Newcastle as a wealthy and influential Whig, who yet was not a member of the inner coterie of the party managers, and was in fact jealous of them.[2]

The situation became still more difficult and complicated in the following year. Godolphin and Marlborough knew that Harley was not loyal to them, and had it not been for the partiality of the Queen to him would most certainly have got rid of him. Harley on his part had been complaining bitterly to Newcastle of 'ingratitude, treachery, folly, and madness as is scarce to be matched', and of 'malice as is scarce credible'.[3] Now events played into the hands of

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, pp. 194-5.

[2] See G. M. Trevelyan, *Ramillies* (1932), p. 317.

[3] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 201: 23 Sept., 1707, 31 Jan., 1707/8.

Harley's enemies.[1] A clerk in his office, one William Greg, was discovered to have been engaged in treasonable correspondence with France. He was arrested, and on 19 January, 1708, put upon his trial for high treason. There was no doubt whatever of his guilt—indeed he pleaded guilty—and that he must suffer for it; but the Whigs sought higher game than this mere underling; they hoped that it would be possible to incriminate Harley, and they loudly asserted that he was implicated. Harley was, in fact, quite innocent; on the other hand, the proceedings against Greg brought to light the most culpable indolence and carelessness in the conduct of the business of the Secretary of State's office. Godolphin and Marlborough seized the heaven-sent opportunity to be rid of Harley, and forced the Queen to agree to his dismissal—or, more strictly, forced Harley to see that his position was untenable and to prevail upon the Queen to accept his resignation.[2]

The year 1708 brought a much greater excitement in the French expedition under Forbin, which was sent to Scotland in the interests of the Pretender. Forbin was daunted by the English fleet under Byng and never even attempted a landing. But serious fears had been aroused of a Jacobite rising in Scotland, powerfully assisted by France. In March, before the peril had been dissipated and when apprehension was still at its height, Francis Child and a number of goldsmiths, who had always been jealous of the Bank of England, sought to take advantage of the situation, to create a financial panic, and thus to ruin the Bank. This new crisis was averted by a number of public-spirited persons, who came to the rescue of the Bank, when depositors

[1] There is a vivid account of Harley's intrigues at this time and of his downfall in Winston Churchill, *Marlborough and his Times*, vol. iii (1936), pp. 311-58.

[2] *An Account of the Conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough* (1742), pp. 190-212; Burnet, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 494-6; W. Coxe, *Memoirs of the Duke of Marlborough* (3 vols., 1907), vol. ii, pp. 191-3.

were making heavy demands for payment, by advancing large sums to the corporation. Among these the Duke of Newcastle was foremost.[1] When the dangers through which the ship of state had been passing as the result of the machinations of foes, both without and within, had all been successfully avoided, public indignation turned against those who had so unpatriotically sought to make private advantage out of national jeopardy, and against the Tories who had been rejoicing in the embarrassments caused to their party adversaries. The consequence was that in the general election the Whigs gained a great advantage; and the Earl of Sunderland, now Newcastle's brother-in-law owing to his marriage with Arabella Cavendish, wrote on 27 May to the Duke, who had been exerting his usual influence in the constituencies, to congratulate his Grace most heartily upon the results. He ventured to say, 'It is the most Whig Parliament has been since the revolution.'[2]

But if Sunderland was jubilant about the general election, he was much less satisfied with other consequences of the attempted invasion. He was alarmed by the lack of energy shown by Ministers in taking severe measures against suspects of Jacobitism. He went so far as to say that if there was to be acquiescence in such supineness, they might as well submit to Godolphin and Marlborough bringing in the Pretender. He was, or pretended to be, aghast at the prospect of affairs, and he besought the Duke not to remain at Welbeck until the assembly of the new Parliament, but to come up to London at once, however reluctant he might be to leave the country three weeks or a

[1] See N. Tindal, *Continuation of Rapin's History of England* (5 vols., folio, 1743-5), vol. iv, p. 544; A. Andreades, *History of the Bank of England* (1909), pp. 120-1.

[2] The original correspondence between Sunderland and Newcastle at this date is in Brit. Mus., Lansdowne MS. 1236, ff. 242-53. Prof. Trevelyan has printed the letters in an appendix to his *Ramillies*, pp. 412-16. For this letter see p. 413.

month before the session started. 'Our all is at stake,' he declared; measures must be concerted at once. If things were not put right during the next session of Parliament, 'there's an end of the Revolution and the Protestant succession'.[1] In rather less excitable terms Lord Chancellor Cowper also urged Newcastle to come to London. He was apprehensive of a split in the party, and feared that if Newcastle and others of his mediating views did not use their efforts to compose the discord, 'honest men' (as he described the Whigs) might be found fighting with, or even under, the Tories in the new Parliament which gave such promise of being so preponderatingly 'honest' in its composition.[2] Another indication of the instability of the political situation in the year 1708 is that the 'proud' Duke of Somerset, not usually a very active politician, though often influential behind the scenes, was contemplating the possibility of forming a new Ministry on an entirely different basis. He discussed this idea with both the Duke of Devonshire and the Duke of Newcastle, as moderate Whigs.

The fears of Sunderland proved groundless. Whig influence was more powerful during the next twelve months than at any other period of the reign, and the Junto certainly exerted more influence over the Administration. But hardly had this consummation been reached than the Whigs began to weaken their own position by two gross blunders. They failed to make use of a splendid opportunity for concluding an advantageous peace in 1709 and 1710, by insisting upon quite impossible demands; and in an evil day they decided to impeach Dr. Sacheverell.

The decision to give such prominence to a clergyman highly popular with susceptible ladies, but of no inherent importance, must soon have been recognised as a great

[1] Trevelyan, *Ramillies*, pp. 413-14.
[2] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 205.

blunder, even by those who had originally been most anxious for the impeachment. Ministers found that they had merely given a splendid advertisement to Sacheverell, and to the principles of 'passive obedience' which he had advocated, so that what a few hundreds had heard in church was now bruited abroad to hundreds of thousands all over the country. They had, indeed, stirred up a veritable hornets' nest, and made themselves look highly ridiculous. Toryism was encouraged everywhere, and the indefatigable Harley was given an opportunity to raise his head again, with the ever invaluable assistance of Mrs. Masham. The Duchess of Marlborough had become actually odious to her once devoted 'Mrs. Freeman'; and her husband became unpopular because of victories such as Malplaquet, won at terrible cost, barren of result and certainly bringing peace no nearer. Clear indication of an approaching crisis appeared in the dismissal of the Earl of Sunderland. He was personally unpopular with the Queen, who had submitted very reluctantly to his admission into the Government; but no mere pique could explain the removal of Marlborough's son-in-law. Both among our allies and in France, where the event was received with great rejoicing, this move was interpreted as a blow struck at the predominance of Marlborough.

Newcastle, who had been among the peers who found Sacheverell to be guilty,[1] was one of those who joined in writing a letter to the commander-in-chief because they feared he might be so much disgusted by the dismissal of his son-in-law as to throw up his charge. They expressed their sympathy with him in the mortification he must feel at this critical juncture, when the fate of Europe depended so largely upon him; and they conjured him, by the glory he had already won and by all that was dear to him at home, not to leave his great work unfinished, but to remain

[1] See Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, vol. vi, p. 887.

at the head of the army.[1] Financial interests in the City were gravely alarmed at the possible significance of the removal of Sunderland; and the Governor and the Deputy Governor of the Bank of England, together with two other Directors, had an interview with Newcastle, apparently at the house of the Duke of Devonshire, at which they represented to the former the national dangers likely to follow upon any change of Ministry. They presumably chose to confide in Newcastle because of the valuable assistance he had rendered to the Bank in the crisis of 1708. The Duke agreed to present them to the Queen, and they had an interview with her, at which she informed them that she had some time ago resolved to remove the Earl of Sunderland for particular reasons of state; but that she had no intention of making any further changes, and that in any case she would see to it that nothing happened to impair the public credit.[2]

Soon after this interview with the Queen, Newcastle left London for Welbeck. He was repeatedly urged during the following weeks to return, but he was detained there by 'a difficulty of breathing'. The Queen's assurances had reassured nobody. There were apprehensions of more serious changes to come, and of a dissolution of Parliament. Harley, who was probably sincere at the beginning of July in not as yet desiring such a thing, wrote to the Duke deprecating these malicious reports, which he accused the Whigs of deliberately spreading abroad for the purpose of shaking the national credit. He added that every day her Majesty disliked Godolphin and the Duchess of Marlborough more, and every day they gave her greater occasion.[3] A week later Lord Halifax wrote to Newcastle to say that he had been trying to carry on the good work which the Duke had

[1] *Account of the Conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough*, pp. 257-9.

[2] T. Lediard, *Life of Marlborough* (3 vols., 1736), vol. iii, p. 19.

[3] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 211.

begun. He had been assuring everybody that a dissolution of Parliament would give such a shock to credit as to render it impossible to finance the war, and at the same time destroy all prospect of a peace. What he had done, he said, was but a faint imitation of Newcastle's excellent move of introducing the City magnates to the Queen. Her Majesty had sent assurances to the Courts of our Allies that no further ministerial changes were in contemplation. This step he attributed to the effect of Newcastle's action, and he was not unhopeful.[1] But on the very same day Godolphin wrote to say that the position of affairs was certainly no better, and a week later Cowper informed the Duke that things were worse; as the result of a 'wonderful deal of intrigue', they had been brought to as miserable a state as could possibly be in so short a time. He feared that such news would not help to cure a man who had the interests of his country so much at heart as his Grace had. He added that 'a humble servant' of the Duke's, by whom he obviously meant Robert Harley, continued to be very resolute for a dissolution of Parliament 'notwithstanding great endeavours to dissuade him'.[2]

From the moment of Sunderland's dismissal it had been clear, despite all protestations to the contrary, that this was only the prelude to a more drastic ministerial change. With the dismissal of Godolphin on 7 August the engineer of the whole plan at length emerged from the background. Harley was created Chancellor of the Exchequer. He had not sought that position, and had tried in vain to induce the Duke of Shrewsbury to become Lord Treasurer.[3] His own position was not altogether easy. He had wanted to overthrow the supremacy of Godolphin and Marlborough, who had turned him out in 1708, and he had succeeded in doing

[1] *Portland MSS.*, pp. 211-12. [2] *Ibid.*, vol ii, p. 212.

[3] See Nicholson and Turberville, *Charles Talbot, Duke of Shrewsbury* (Cambridge, 1930), pp. 177-9.

so. But he had no wish for a complete reconstruction of the Ministry. It was never his design merely to substitute one kind of party Cabinet for another kind of party Cabinet. He intended simply to return to the type of mixed or coalition Government which had existed prior to 1708. An understanding with the great Whig leaders, with Somers and Wharton, was impossible; they would not amalgamate with one whom they had long distrusted, and very likely believed that they still had the whip hand. Harley, still anxious to include Whigs in his Administration, tried to induce men like Lord Chancellor Cowper and Robert Walpole to make common cause with him. But the difficulty, if not impossibility, of Harley's policy lay not only in the reluctance of the Whigs to work with the intriguer, but in the determination of the Tories to make full use of their great opportunity. They naturally wished to reap the full benefit of the obvious turn of public feeling in their favour, and to drive all Whigs out of office, not only in the Cabinet, but in every subordinate position throughout the country. If only there were a general election they were bound, they felt, to achieve a resounding victory and to dominate the House of Commons. Once that was accomplished, they could make a clean sweep everywhere. The pressure put upon Harley to ask for a dissolution of Parliament was, therefore, very strong; he found himself unable to resist it. But once he gave way, his own idea of a coalition Government was doomed, and he must accept the Tory policy, for which his bosom friend and much more brilliant partner, Henry St. John, was standing.

On the dismissal of Godolphin, Somers wrote earnestly to Newcastle to come up to London, even if for reasons of health he would prefer to remain at Welbeck. He and his friends begged this, he said, 'in the most importunate manner'. He would not venture to be thus pertinacious were it not that he felt that the Duke could do 'a great deal

of good' in London, and was 'infinitely wanted'.[1] Newcastle, writing to Halifax on 12 August, declared that he was 'full of fears' lest Godolphin's removal might 'in some measure' affect the commander-in-chief abroad and our credit at home; but he had 'a particular respect' for more than one of the new Ministers.[2] It was obvious that he refused to be alarmed; and the sober tone of his letters is in marked contrast with the excitability of his Whig correspondents. He also refused to come to London despite their vehement adjurations, alleging that with a general election in prospect it would be dangerous for him to leave the constituencies in which he had influence, even for a short time; there would certainly be some tricks played if he did.[3] Somers was satisfied, or said he was, that there could be no greater usefulness for the Duke than in taking care of elections;[4] but it is obvious that Halifax was far from content. He no longer pressed his Grace to come to town; 'but depend upon it', he declared emphatically,

> 'your country is at stake and in more danger of being lost, than I fancy, you imagine. The folly, the rage, the despondency, and despair of some, and the boldnesse, villany, and fury, of others, will soon bring things to such a crisis that the prudence and moderation that remain on either side will be trodden under foot, and borne down the torrent.'[5]

While he was in correspondence with the Whig Junto, Newcastle was being assiduously courted by Harley. If he could not hope to conciliate the Junto, and even Cowper and Walpole were resolved to go into opposition, were there not Whigs—still more moderate than they—who could be

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, pp. 213-14.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 215. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 216.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 217. Somers to Newcastle, 19 Aug.
[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 216-17. Halifax to Newcastle, 17 Aug.

prevailed upon to support him? Newcastle had not a tittle of the ability of a Somers, a Halifax, a Cowper, or a Walpole (perhaps that was no disadvantage from Harley's point of view), and he had all the power that great wealth can bestow. The Lord Treasurer, therefore, set out to reassure the Duke, to prevent him from being afflicted with that real or assumed dismay which agitated the Junto. Thus, he wrote on 5 August to explain what his policy in office would be. It would be directed to the great object of making an honourable and a stable peace; to maintaining also the interests of the Queen's allies; to preserving the liberty and property of the subject in general, and the indulgence to Dissenters in particular; and to safeguarding the succession of the House of Hanover.[1] Harley confined himself to generalities. But how eminently wise and sane and moderate it all sounded, differing in no respect from Whig policy! A great deal of feeling against the Nonconformists had been aroused by the Sacheverell case among the more bigoted Tories, but the new Minister bound himself to preserve their rights and privileges. If Harley put the attainment of an honourable peace first and foremost in his programme, so would any Whig. The only difference was that the Godolphin Government had been so arrogant and bellicose in its methods of negotiation that it seemed constitutionally incapable of obtaining what it alleged to be its object. Harley might be able to do a great deal better, and assuredly he could not do worse. Such may have been the Duke of Newcastle's ruminations as he penned his unemotional answers to the jeremiads of Halifax and Somers. He was not disposed to think evil of Harley as the Junto did. He decided to write a letter to the Queen herself. We do not know the terms of it. No doubt it was eminently discreet, containing little more than an expression of devotion to her person, and of a desire to serve her. At any

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 213.

rate she was extremely pleased with the Duke, and desired that her hearty thanks should be conveyed to him. No doubt Harley, who conveyed the royal message, was equally pleased with the Duke.

Newcastle had not yet definitely chosen his side; he had not broken with the Junto. Indeed he was acting as a mediator, undertaking, and apparently carrying out his promises, to write to Harley on behalf of Somers and his friends as they thought proper. A few days later he assured Somers that in every letter which he had written to Harley he had

> 'pressed his entering into an entire confidence and friendship with your Lordship, Lord Halifax, and our friends that are too prudent to desire to see all things in a flame; and have with all the force I could, shown him that it was both for the Queen's service and his own, so to do, to preserve the body of the honest party in her Majesty's interest'.

He had 'inculcated the danger it would be to himself to be thrown entirely into the Tories, who were every day pushing him to render him desperate with everybody else'. The Duke added that the best way to prevent a dissolution of Parliament was to show plainly that the former heats of party antagonism would disappear, and that there was a general willingness to co-operate in carrying on the business of the nation.[1]

But, as we have already seen, the Junto did not desire to co-operate with Harley, and in the state of public opinion in the country no such co-operation would have been possible, even had they sought it. The dissolution of Parliament could not be avoided, and a general election took place in October. Harley continued to do his utmost to win the support of Newcastle. He told him that the Duke of Devonshire was distasteful to the Queen, but that he (the Duke of

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 217.

Newcastle) enjoyed her regard. 'The confidence she puts in you will speedily be made manifest, and she hopes you will continue your assistance in the public service which is so much valued by her.' As soon as she had shown strength and ability to give the law to both sides, 'then will moderation be truly shewn in the exercise of power without regard to parties only'.[1]

The general election proved to be the anticipated Tory triumph. We find the Duke of Somerset writing to Newcastle from Petworth to say that he had gone there with intent to keep as many Tories and Jacobites out of Parliament as possible. He spoke cheerfully of finding a true spirit 'among the poor discarded Whigs to unite and keep out the common enemy'.[2] The Duke of Newcastle acted more circumspectly. He was trying to keep a foot in each camp, and his electoral proceedings in October, 1710, showed this. Thus for one of his Yorkshire boroughs he brought in two full-blooded Whigs, but for another of them, Boroughbridge, he secured the election of two Tories.[3] After the Tory triumph at the elections there was a complete reshuffling of offices in the Administration; soon Newcastle and Somerset were the only Whigs left, and Somerset did not remain long. Towards the end of October he came to Court; had 'a very rough audience'; and then went away in high dudgeon in order to avoid a meeting of the Council. Soon after he resigned his post of Master of the Horse. Halifax, relating the incident of the 'rough audience', exclaimed that public credit was fallen past retrieve.

> 'There are many black clouds gathering from all quarters. If your Grace's presence does not dissipate them,

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 219. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 221-2.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. iv, p. 612; Brit. Mus. Lansdowne MS. 1236, f. 255. See also G. M. Trevelyan, *The Peace and the Protestant Succession* (1934), p. 72.

nothing can, but I think so many people have a confidence and a relyance in you, that you might yet prevent much mischief.'[1]

The Duke of Newcastle, a single righteous stalwart in the midst of the Philistines, was to keep the worst of Philistinism at bay. No doubt, although they were far too polite to say so, the 'honest' party often asked themselves how this former champion of theirs could feel at all comfortable in his solitary eminence, and whether his Whiggism could be very deep if he fraternised so easily with a band of Tories. Would one who seemed so well content to remain among them be likely to prevent the mischiefs they might intend? So far as we can tell, Newcastle was perfectly at his ease with his new colleagues, though whether he would have remained so had he lived a little longer must be very doubtful, in view of the serious discord which soon rent the Tory party, and especially its inner circle. In his stately way Collins remarks that the new Ministry

'did not judge it convenient to disoblige so great a subject, as the Duke of Newcastle',

and they therefore not only did not remove him but added to his office, by appointing him to be Lord Chief Justice in Eyre north of Trent and Lord Warden of Sherwood Forest, and on 21 May, 1711, Lord-lieutenant of Middlesex and of the City and Livery of Westminster.[2]

What made Newcastle's situation in the new Ministry possible, and perhaps even agreeable to him, was his faith in Harley, which he shared with none of his Whig intimates. But there was more than belief in Harley as a statesman; there appears also to have been genuine liking and friendship. And Harley at first was able to keep his diffi-

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 223.
[2] Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

cult team under control, though the jealous rivalry of his erstwhile boon companion, St. John, made things increasingly hard for him and eventually, just before Anne's death, produced a complete rupture and a political crisis. Harley's own personal prestige and popularity were quite irrationally increased by a pure accident. A certain Huguenot refugee, the Marquis de Guiscard, was employed for the sum of £500 a year to do secret-service work for the British Government. He appears to have owed this salary, large according to the money values of the time, to the influence of St. John. Harley thought the amount excessive and reduced it. Thereupon Guiscard, in great resentment, hired himself out to the French Court. His double-dealing was discovered, and he was brought before the Privy Council for interrogation. Guiscard succeeded in getting possession of a penknife, and, armed with this, he suddenly lunged out and struck the Lord Treasurer in the chest, with intent to kill him. But he struck a bone, and although Harley was badly hurt, he was never in the slightest danger. This of course was not apparent at the time, and to the Ministers present it appeared as though he was being assassinated before their eyes. Newcastle was among those present, and he, like St. John and several others, drew his sword and stabbed the miscreant in several places.[1] The attempted murder created great indignation in the country, and Harley became the hero of the hour—so much so that St. John was so puerile as to be jealous. Burnet indeed tells us that it was Guiscard's intention to murder St. John, and that he only struck at Harley because he could not reach the other,

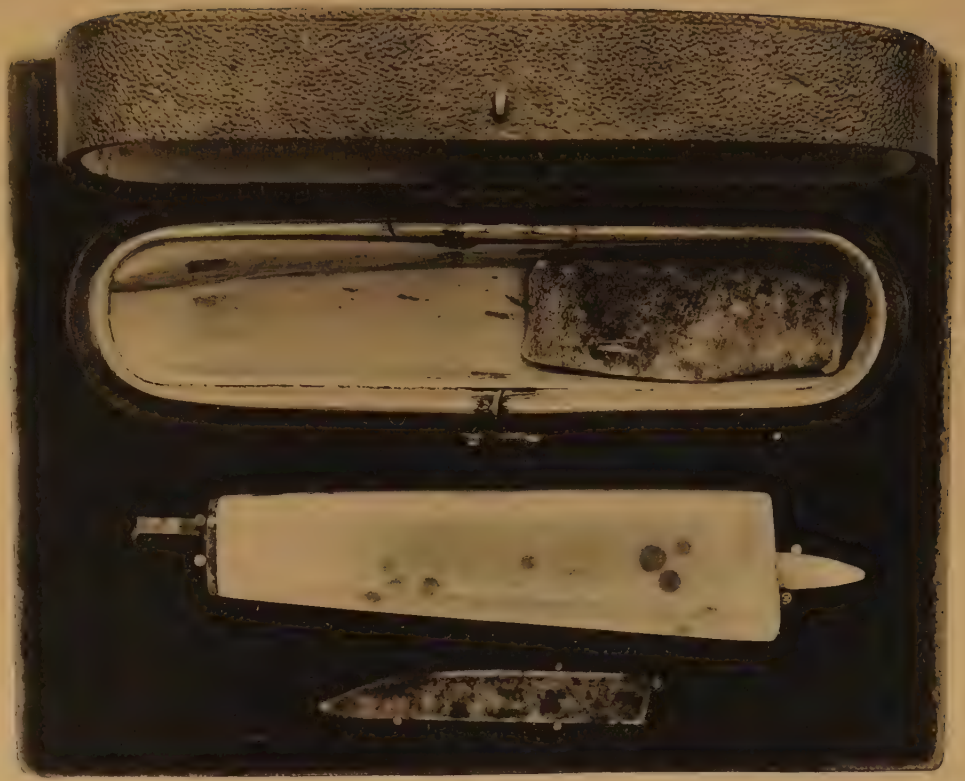
[1] The various accounts of this incident differ in details. See, for example, *Portland MSS.*, vol. iv, pp. 668-70; Burnet, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 566-7; 'The True Narrative of Guiscard's Examination' in Swift's *Works* (Scott's ed.), vol. xii, p. 337. Harley wrote in person to Newcastle asking his attendance at the examination of Guiscard. *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 225. The penknife used by Guiscard is in the possession of the Duke of Portland at Welbeck.

who was thereby deprived of the chance of being either killed or idolised.

We do not need to follow the subsequent history of the quarrel between the two Tory leaders, for Newcastle was not concerned in it. Indeed we hear little more of his political activities. He appears in the last few months of his life to have been chiefly concerned in what was indeed a matter of great consequence to him, the disposal in marriage of his only daughter, Henrietta, or Harriet as she was more often called. The great prospective fortunes of the heiress had already attracted suitors. In 1703, when she was only nine, a Count of the Holy Roman Empire whose name is not revealed had been prepared to become a naturalised Englishman if only he could win her hand; and the proposal that the Electoral Prince of Hanover should marry Henrietta was made by one Jacob Bonnell. These two suggestions cannot have been taken seriously; but in March, 1708, the Duke of Somerset approached Newcastle on the subject, asking him whether he was prepared to receive a proposal from him, and saying that an alliance between their families, if the ages of Newcastle's daughter and his son were thought suitable, was one which he had long contemplated, and of which he would be proud.[1] Newcastle objected that his daughter was too young for matrimony to be considered yet awhile. It happened, however, that Henrietta was seized with a serious illness. Indeed old Lady Strafford, who had for some time been anxious that her son should marry one of the richest heiresses in Europe, and was very impatient with him for taking no steps in the matter,[2] records in the same month that Harriet, 'is vyolent il of a feavour, the Docters thincks her in great danger; they pray it may proov the small pox, nothing elc can save her, as I am told'.[3] Three years later, on 5 Febru-

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, pp. 193, 199.

[2] *Wentworth Papers* (1883), pp. 58, 101-2, 122. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 63.



Broken penknife with which the Marquis de Guiscard attempted to assassinate Robert Harley, 8 March, 1711

PUBLIC

ary, 1711, Somerset reverted to the project, reminding Newcastle that the only objection he had raised was that of age. He had waited ever since, he said, without considering anyone else as a possible wife for his son, Lord Hertford. He had only two sons living, unfortunately, the elder of whom would be of an age to marry in seven years. They both had the recommendation of not having had that most fatal of all distempers, the smallpox. He concluded:

> 'These are the reasons that I do again repeat my former offer, in hopes to receive a more agreeable answer; but if I am not so happy, then I must entirely lay aside this thought, and my son must look out for a wife elsewhere, because I am resolved to marry him as soon as one is to be found.[1]

When yet another proposal for the disposal of Henrietta came from the Duke of Leeds, on behalf of his grandson Lord Danby, Newcastle rejected this offer also. But Danby's father, the Marquess of Carmarthen, who in 1712 became Duke of Leeds, was believed by Newcastle to be so determined to secure the great heiress that he suspected him of a design to carry her off by main force. At any rate the Duchess subsequently spoke of the Marquess's particular malice 'from our rejecting his impertinence in his proposals', and said that her husband had suspected Carmarthen's 'mad son' of a 'design to use violence on our dear child'.[2]

About the same time that the Duke of Somerset was seeking a wife for his son, it happened that a wealthy citizen of London, Hutton by name, approached Robert Harley's younger brother Edward, who was Auditor of the Imprest, and sounded him on the possibility of a match between Robert Harley's son, also named Edward, and his only

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 225.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 233.

daughter. He undertook to provide a considerable fortune straight away and to settle all his estates upon her. The Harleys had advisers who held that it would have to be a round sum indeed—nothing short of £100,000 at least—that could compensate for the corruption of mixing with such a strain as that of this rich but plebeian citizen. The young lady might have all the virtues, might be a little angel, but those of her education often had defective manners; and as Edward had 'the whole of the female part of the nation' to pick and choose from, there was not much to be said for this proposal.

It looks, then, as if nothing would have come of Mr. Hutton's overture in any case. Certainly nothing more was likely to be thought of it when most remarkable proof was forthcoming that Robert Harley's son could indeed look a great deal higher than any citizen's daughter, however ample her dowry. Very shortly after Mr. Hutton's proposal had been made, the Auditor was sent for by the great Duke of Newcastle, who at once began to discuss the question of young Edward Harley's marriage, and expressed the opinion that a much better alliance than one to a citizen's daughter might be expected. Shortly after this Newcastle had an interview with Robert Harley, who had recently (May, 1711) entered the House of Lords with the title of Earl of Oxford, and showed him a letter which he had recently received proposing a match for his daughter. The name of the writer of this letter is left blank in the Auditor's account of these transactions, but clearly it was that of the Duke of Somerset. The Duke then asked Oxford what he thought of this suggestion, and added rather cryptically, 'I have several reasons not to hearken to it, for having no other child, I will please myself both in the person and the family.' While he refrained from expressing himself clearly, he apparently left a clear impression on Oxford's mind that what he desired was a marriage between Lady Hen-

rietta and young Edward Harley.[1] This interview took place shortly before the Duke's death.

Newcastle seems to have abandoned the Holles family residence of Haughton immediately after his marriage to Margaret Cavendish, and henceforth to have lived at Welbeck. He bore some resemblance to the first Duke of Newcastle in his fondness for horses and for hunting. Defoe, whose *Tour through the whole Island of Great Britain* was written not long after Duke John's death, in his references to the great houses of Nottinghamshire—Thoresby, Rufford, and Welbeck, says they are all noble seats, Welbeck being especially beautiful with large new additions, fine apartments and good gardens; but its chief glory is the park with its splendid stock of fine timber, 'as well as the largest quantity of deer that there are anywhere to be seen. The late Duke's chief delight being chiefly on Horseback and in the Chase, it was not to be wondered at if he rather made his Parks fine than his Gardens, and his Stables than his Mansion-House.'[2] Nowhere in England was finer hunting to be had than in Sherwood Forest, and the Duke had recently obtained from the Queen, under letters patent, licence to make a park of not less than 3,000 acres out of his lands and hereditaments, wherein no one else had any rights of common, taking in parts of Clumber, Hardwick, Bothamsall, Normanton, and Carburton.[3] This was the origin of Clumber Park.

Newcastle spent the summer of 1711 as usual at Welbeck, and on 13 July was stag-hunting in Sherwood Forest when his horse fell, carrying him to the ground. There

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. v, pp. 656-7; vol. vii, p. 39. The former from 'Memoirs of the Harley Family' by Edward Harley, the Auditor.

[2] Defoe, *A Tour through the whole Island of Great Britain* (1927 ed., 2 vols.), vol. ii, p. 562.

[3] Brit. Mus. Add. MS., 33,060. *Newcastle Papers*, vol. ccclxxxvi, ff. 3, 5.

were no superficial injuries, and the Duke felt well enough to mount his horse again, and ride a distance of three miles—to Thoresby. There he was blooded, after which operation he was taken back to Welbeck in his chaise. As soon as he heard of the accident, Oxford wrote to the Duchess expressing his great distress at the news.

> 'No person less concerned than your Grace, can conceive the disorder I am under, and indeed the agonies I endure, while I consider the man in the world I most entirely loved should be under any unfortunate accident and I not at hand to express my duty to him.'

The accident proved indeed much more serious than had at first been supposed, for two days later the Duke died as the result of it—leaving behind him the reputation of being as mean as he was wealthy. Macky speaks of the Duke as 'a black, ruddy complexioned Man', who had the best estate in England and spent most of his time in improving it, was very covetous, was firm for the constitution of his country, and had one daughter who would be the richest heiress in Europe. At a later date Swift added to this account the laconic words: 'cheated by her father.'[1]

The Duke certainly does not appear to have been at all an amiable man, and the tone of his letters, especially to those who were nearest, and therefore should have been dearest to him, was distant and formal at best, and sometimes both arrogant and acid. Those written to his wife were signed 'yours faithfully', and were often in the form of peremptory commands or steely reprimands. He finds she has spent six shillings on oranges and lemons; he desires her to inform him what she wanted them for. He

[1] *Macky's Memoirs* (1733), p. 35. Macky speaks of the Duke as 'nearly Sixty Years old'; but he was only forty-nine when he died. See also Swift's *Works*, vol. xii, p. 224; Burnet, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 579-80.

complains of the literary style of her letters; she does not form her letters properly. He accuses her of peevishness. He boasts that he is better tempered than she is, and certainly she does not appear to have had the sweetest of dispositions; but that his nature was any more agreeable than hers it is difficult to believe. The claim is certainly not acceptable on his unsupported evidence. The second Earl of Oxford is responsible for the anecdote that once when the Duke forgot to ask his private chaplain to say grace at dinner in accordance with the normal practice, and the chaplain reminded him of the omission, he met with the retort: 'If you cannot take your salary without disturbing the family, leave it.'[1] Altogether it does not seem that the Duke of Newcastle, however much he may have made himself acceptable among politicians, can have been at all popular within his own family circle. Owing to the dispositions of his will he was probably even less popular after his death.

[1] See R. W. Goulding, 'Henrietta, Countess of Oxford,' in *Transactions of the Thoroton Society*, vol. xxvii (1924), pp. 1-3.

Chapter XII

THE HARLEY FAMILY

Although only two of its members actually lived at Welbeck Abbey, the connection between the Harley family and the house is very intimate. Those two members were Edward, second Earl of Oxford, and his wife Henrietta. Most of their married life was spent at Wimpole in Cambridgeshire or at Dover Street in London; but they resided at Welbeck from time to time, and after the Earl's early death in 1741 his widow lived there for a number of years. In consequence the invaluable Harley family papers, which had been housed at Wimpole, were transferred to Welbeck. The great bulk of the splendid Harleian collection of books, manuscripts, portraits, miniatures, coins, etc., which is the second Earl of Oxford's chief title to fame, has found domicile elsewhere; yet Welbeck contains many memorials upon its walls and in its library of the Earl himself, his ancestors, and his friends.

'The family of Harley in England, is undoubtedly more ancient than the Norman Conquest,' says Collins, and he cites in proof of his contention a warrior of that name who commanded an army under Ethelred against Sweyn of Norway, and a Sir John de Harley, who possessed Harley Castle and lordship before 1066.[1] There is no need for us to probe into such doubtful antiquity. The fortunes of the house were really laid by Thomas Harley of Brampton Bryan, in Herefordshire, who lived from 1548 to 1631. His

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 185.

son Robert, made a Knight of the Bath by James I in 1603, was a remarkable man. He was one of the most distinguished examples of the type of high-minded, intensely religious, but somewhat austere, Puritan squire who was the real backbone of the Parliamentary cause in the Civil War. If his principles were rigid, his integrity was complete; and the efforts of the Duke of Buckingham to win the allegiance of one who might in opposition prove troublesome found him quite incorruptible. The Duke's efforts to entice him by tangible reward only served to prove to him, as he bluntly informed Buckingham, that his former suspicions of the Duke's untrustworthiness were only too well justified.

Sternly rigorous, of a fine courage, yet tender-hearted, Sir Robert found a fitting helpmate in the famous Brilliana, who had as brave a spirit and as noble a character as his own. She was the daughter of Sir Edward Conway, who at the time of her birth in 1600 was Governor of the Dutch town of Brill at the mouth of the Maas, which had been handed over by the United Provinces in 1585, when they bought the assistance of Queen Elizabeth in their War of Independence at a price. The curious name of Brilliana was given to the child in honour of her birthplace. Her father in 1624 was given a peerage, and in 1627 advanced to a viscounty. On her mother's side she was connected with Sir Horace Vere, afterwards Lord Vere of Tilbury, a grandson of the fifteenth Earl of Oxford. Thus, on her becoming in 1623 the third wife of Sir Robert Harley, there was established a connection between the Harleys and the Veres which, when the earldom of Oxford in that family became extinct, encouraged Lord Treasurer Harley, on his own elevation to the peerage, to take that title.

There is no doubt from their correspondence[1] that the affinity of temperament and principles between husband

[1] See *Letters of Lady Brilliana Harley* (Camden Soc., 1854); *Portland MSS.*, vol. iii, pp. 17-209 (*passim*).

and wife was so close that the marriage was exceedingly happy. The first sixteen years of their married life were untroubled, and Brilliana's letters are mainly concerned with the domestic matters of everyday life, the health of her husband, and of her children, three sons (Edward, Robert, and Thomas) and four daughters.[1] They were often ailing, and she herself, whose spirit was unconquerable, was not physically robust. Her own persistent ill-health inspired her in 1628 to produce a small volume of quotations from the Bible and meditations. She was much concerned to bring up her family in the same ways of piety which she and her husband followed. Particularly to Ned—'You are to me next my owne hart' she writes to him—she imparts her counsels that he should be diligent in prayer, in reading the Bible, and in meditation on divine things. She is anxious for his physical well-being also—for his food and his clothes, especially while he is at Oxford.

But the troubles which afflicted the nation increasingly in the reign of Charles I inevitably had their effect upon the happy household of Brampton Bryan, and Brilliana had to give her mind to matters of greater consequence than her own private concerns. Sir Robert, to use the words of Collins,

> 'was a great Patron of Religion and Learning; an Enemy of Oppression, Bigotry, and Hypocrisy; and protected the Puritan Ministers against the Violence of the Courts of High Commission and Star Chamber'.[2]

He was also an iconoclast, as were many otherwise admirable Puritans of his day, and he became chairman of a

[1] See two articles in the *National Review* for May and October, 1923, respectively—'Brilliana of Brampton Bryan' by Miss Bradford Whiting, and 'More about Brilliana of Brampton Bryan' by R. W. Goulding.

[2] Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

committee set up by the House of Commons in 1644 to supervise the destruction of idolatrous relics. His fanatical vandalism in doing damage to ornaments and stained-glass windows in churches made him very unpopular with his Royalist neighbours in Herefordshire, as political and religious animosities grew ever more intense. Brilliana lamented 'to see the affections of this cuntry so against Ned's father that is worth thousands of them'. But she comforted herself with the reflection that, 'it is for Gods caus, and then it is an honnor to suffer'.[1]

When the Civil War broke out Sir Robert raised a troop of horse, and he and his son Edward went off to fight for the Parliament, leaving Brilliana to fend for herself at Brampton Bryan, he deeming Herefordshire as safe for her as any other part of the country, whereas it is certain that, had he allowed her to go to London as she wished, she would have been a great deal safer. It is obvious that although she manfully asserted that she had no fear, and was content to remain where her husband desired her to be, she was apprehensive from the first. 'I acknowledg I doo not thinke myself safe wheare I am', she wrote to her son Ned; but she added, 'If your father thinkes it best for me to be in the cuntry, I am very well pleased with what he shall thinke best.' She told her husband, 'Since you thinke I need not be afraid where I am, I will be of your minde.'[2] She made provision for defence, getting together a store of muskets and ammunition; for she knew herself to be in the midst of enemies. The crisis came in July, 1643, when the Royalists decided to attack the castle. Surrounded and cut off from her friends, the heroic woman armed her retainers; placed two cannon on the walls; and prepared to resist when summoned by Fitzwilliam Coningsby to surrender the castle, with

[1] *Letters of Lady Brilliana Harley*, p. 145.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 169; article by R. W. Goulding, 'More about Brilliana' in *National Review*, Oct. 1923, p. 292.

its arms and ammunition, on pain of being 'proceeded against both by law and martial force' as guilty of high treason, the dauntless woman replied: 'To your demaund of my horse and armes, which are no more than to defend my house—this is my answer. Our gracious Kinge, having many times promised that he will maintaine the Lawes and libertyes of the Kingdome, by which I have as good right to what is mine as any one, maintaines me these, and I know not upon what ground the refusal of giveinge up what is mine—by the lawes of the land—will prove me or any one that is with me, traytors.'[1] For the space of seven weeks she bade the enemy defiance, refusing to surrender, though the park outside was destroyed and most of the village was burnt. After many attacks the Royalists were forced to raise the siege. Brilliana is therefore 'highly celebrated for her Prudence and Valour', for her 'skilful management of Treaties with the Adversaries, and exemplary Courage, which animated the Defenders'.[2] In October she died, possibly because her weak frame was worn out by the rigours of the siege. In the following March the castle of Brampton Bryan was again attacked, and this time was taken and destroyed. Three of Sir Robert's children, who were in the castle at the time, were made prisoners, but soon afterwards released. On the other hand, his lands were sequestrated by the triumphant Royalists. However, Sir Robert lived to see the triumph of the righteous, for he lived till 1656. He may be esteemed happy in the time of his death, for he did not survive to see the victory of Puritanism crumble away.

Colonel Edward Harley,[3] the eldest son, was like his father in his religious faith, his uprightness, and his chivalry.

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. iii, p. 105.

[2] Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

[3] See a few extracts from his own autobiographical notes or *Retrospect* of his life in appendix to *Letters of Lady Brilliana Harley*, pp. 246-50, and Collins, *op. cit.*, pp. 200-5.

Like his father, too, he sat in the House of Commons for Herefordshire, succeeding to the seat on his father's death. The successful siege of Brampton Bryan had been conducted by Sir Henry Lingen. On the defeat of the Royalist party Lingen's estates were taken over in order to compensate the Harley family for the losses they had sustained. Sir Henry himself was dead when this form of reparation was made. Edward Harley received the inventory of her property from the widow. He asked her if it was correct; and upon her assenting, with great gallantry he handed it back to her, for he refused to benefit at her expense. Like his father, Edward was a very earnest Puritan, and a strong supporter of Parliament against Charles I's assertion of the royal prerogative; but like Denzil Holles he had no love for the Ironside army, which established a military dictatorship upon the foundation of Parliament's constitutional claims. Regarding a military despotism as even worse than a royal despotism, he sought, as Denzil Holles sought, to bring the war to an end by agreement, lest the upshot of a struggle for liberty should be the destruction of all liberty. Taking this attitude, he earned the intense displeasure of the leaders of the Army, and he was one of the eleven members of Parliament whom they chose to regard as guilty of high treason. At the end of the year 1648 he and his father were made prisoners by the Army. All those who, like Denzil Holles and Colonel Edward Harley, regarded Cromwell as a worse enemy of the political principles in defence of which they had entered the Civil War, became advocates of the restoration of the Stuart dynasty as the best chance of amelioration; and Harley sat in the Parliament which brought Charles II back to his throne. He was made governor of Dunkirk; but he refused the offer of a viscounty which was made him in recognition of his services to the King. He preferred the much humbler honour of knighthood. At the Revolution he espoused the

cause of the Prince of Orange, raising a troop of horse for his service at his own expense. Ere his death in 1700 he had succeeded, to some extent at all events, in restoring his family to the prosperity which it had enjoyed before the demolition of Brampton Bryan in 1644.

Such were the grandfather and the father of much the most famous Harley in English history—Robert Harley, Lord Treasurer and first Earl of Oxford.[1] It is important to remember his Puritan ancestry and upbringing, because they were an important influence in his political career. While generally associated with the Church of England party, he was always looked upon as a defender of the interests of the Dissenters, and he could generally rely upon valuable support from them. A good deal in his political career, and a good deal also in his private life, would have offended his grandfather's standards of rectitude; yet his Puritan heritage left its mark upon him, and in his speech and in his writings there remained turns of phrase, pious and homely, which revealed his Puritan origin. Born in 1661, he was educated in a remarkable Dissenters' Academy, kept by a minister named Birch, near Burford in Gloucestershire, an academy which at one and the same time numbered among its pupils a future Lord Treasurer in Harley, a future Lord Chancellor in Simon Harcourt, and a future Lord Chief Justice in Thomas Trevor.

It is not possible or necessary in this book to trace the life of a man whose significance in the history of Welbeck lies chiefly in the fact that he was the father of the second Earl of Oxford. But not to say something of his career would be quite impossible, partly because there are so many memorials of him at Welbeck; and partly because (as the most

[1] The only life of the first Earl of Oxford is that by E. S. Roscoe (1902). It is a brief sketch and obviously inadequate. Ample materials for a full biography exist in the collections of Harley Papers at Welbeck and at Longleat.

distinguished member of his family) he was constantly in the thoughts of his son, so that his figure is always in the background of the history of Welbeck up to the time of his death. A third reason is that he began to form that great collection which it was his son's chief object and ambition in life to extend. Certain episodes in his political life have already been mentioned owing to their connection with that of John, Duke of Newcastle, more particularly in the years 1710 and 1711; and we have also seen him discussing with the Duke the possibility of an alliance between Edward Harley and Harriet Holles. The advancement of his family was ever one of Oxford's chief aims in life, and he evidently viewed the splendid prospect suggested to him by Newcastle with the utmost avidity. But by the time that all obstacles had eventually been surmounted and the marriage actually took place, his own political power was threatened; and at the moment when he left London to attend its celebration a serious crisis in his career was at hand. While Oxford was intent upon the enjoyment of this domestic happiness, 'the Lord Bolingbroke and others set themselves to undermine the Treasurer, and took the advantage of his absence at Wimpole upon the marriage of his son'.[1]

His physical powers were certainly failing as early as this —September, 1713—although he was a man of only fifty-two at that date. He was a very different person from the young, ambitious and energetic politician who in the days of William III had made his reputation in the House of Commons, and who, although he possessed no advantage either of commanding appearance (for he was small of

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. v, p. 661. Mr. Keith Feiling, in a comparison between Harley and St. John, commenting upon the former's ambition to achieve a fortune for his family, observes: 'We question whether Harley's ideals ever soared above Sir Edward Harley or the Duke of Newcastle.' *History of the Tory Party* (Oxford, 1924), p. 384.

stature) or of eloquence (for he had no graces either of voice or diction), nevertheless acquired a dominating influence in that assembly. He made a name for himself as one of the Commissioners for examining the Public Accounts in 1690, and as chairman of the committee for examining the naval estimates in the following year; still more by his advocacy of the Triennial Bill.[1] He was particularly prominent after the Treaty of Ryswick, pressing strongly for a drastic reduction of the number of effectives in the army, and also urging that they should all be natural-born subjects. His zeal for military retrenchment, at a time when the Sovereign perceived that the newly-won peace was of the most precarious nature, was as popular with the majority of the House of Commons as it was certainly short-sighted; and his animus against the Dutch was as pleasing to them as it was bitterly resented by William III.[2] The Tories warmly applauded Harley when he ministered to their jealous dislike of the recently founded Bank of England, which gave so much additional financial and political influence to the Whig 'moneyed interest', and when he satisfied the hankerings of those whose capital took the form of real property by carrying through Parliament a Bill for the incorporation of a Land Bank. The scheme was ingenious but quite unsound, and it proved a total failure.

Nevertheless, Harley had been an effective advocate of plausible and superficially attractive measures. He had also shown rare knowledge of the rules and procedure of the House; and he had his reward when in February, 1701, he was elected Speaker. Early in his period of office was

[1] When Harley supported the Triennial Bill his father expressed his joy that the Lord had been pleased to enable his son 'to speak so that some in the House called upon me to bless God that vouchsafed to give me a son so to speak, and also the mercy to me to hear him'. *Portland MSS.*, vol. iii, pp. 548-9. The Bill of 1693 failed; but that of 1694, introduced by Harley, passed into law.

[2] Cf. the comments of his brother Edward, *ibid.*, p. 600.

Robert Harley, afterwards 1st Earl of Oxford and Earl Mortimer, 1661–1724, in Speaker's Robes, holding the Succession Bill of 1701
from a painting by Sir G. Kneller

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passed the famous Succession Act, or Act of Settlement, which, in consequence of the death of the Princess Anne's only surviving child, the Duke of Gloucester, arranged for the future devise of the Crown to the House of Hanover. Harley, who in his later years was to be accused of plotting to bring in the Pretender, was always proud of his association with the passing of this Act; and in his portrait by Kneller at Welbeck he is shewn in his Speaker's robes holding this Bill in his hand. In 1704 Harley became a Privy Councillor and a Secretary of State in Godolphin's Government; but he continued to act as Speaker of the House of Commons for another eleven months—this conjunction of offices, which to us seems extraordinary and obviously improper, being then acceptable at all events temporarily, though its very abnormality was a testimony to Harley's popularity and prestige. Indeed so influential had Harley become that he is described—albeit by a personal friend—as forming with Godolphin and Marlborough a triumvirate, who were 'the spring of all public affairs'. The writer goes on to speak of the counsels of these three statesmen as being 'so united and linked together that they cannot be broken'.[1]

The prediction of abiding amity between the triumvirate was signally falsified, as we have already seen. In 1707 Harley systematically intrigued against his colleagues. He was a man of principle, in the sense that he held certain clear political beliefs very firmly; but at the same time he was so deeply enamoured of underground manœuvre and of methods of artifice and finesse that he seemed to be constitutionally incapable of running straight.[2] He has been described as shewing himself at this period of his career to

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. iv, p. 119.

[2] Cf. Burnet, *History of My Own Time*, vol. ii, p. 579: 'His strength lay in managing parties, and in engaging weak people, by rewards and promises, to depend upon him.'

be 'a base and hardy hypocrite', as one whose 'methods are not to be reconciled with any standard of honour or good faith'.[1] His inability to run straight was due to the fact that his political theories and his political ambitions could not always be reconciled. He abhorred government by party at a time when government by party was becoming a recognised system, and was perhaps under prevailing conditions almost unavoidable. He declared that he had no obligation to either party: he once remarked, 'I know no difference between a mad Whig and a mad Tory'.[2] He told Godolphin:

> 'I dread the thought of running from the extreme of one faction to another, which is the natural consequence of party tyranny, and renders the government like a door which turns both ways upon its hinges to let in each party as it grows triumphant.'[3]

No, Harley believed in coalition; in a national government, the centre of whose equilibrium should be the throne. The conception of the Patriot King is universally associated with St. John, because he was a facile writer as Harley never was, and put the idea on paper; but the conception was Harley's originally, and St. John, who was in many ways the older statesman's pupil, borrowed it from his master.

To Harley government by a party meant simply government by a clique; and of all possible cliques in his day the most powerful and efficient, and therefore to him the most detestable, was that of the Whig Junto. Hence his persistent hostility to it, and his efforts to thwart or even to destroy it. It was too strong to be attacked frontally and

[1] Winston Churchill, *Marlborough and his Times*, vol. iii (1936), p. 332.

[2] See W. Coxe, *Memoirs of Marlborough* (3 vols., 1907), vol. ii, pp. 19-20.

[3] H.M.C., *Bath MSS.*, vol. i, p. 181.

openly: therefore he attacked it by subterranean methods of intrigue. His skill lay in such methods in any case; moreover the influence which he exerted at Court in the reign of Queen Anne, aided and abetted by the pleasing arts of Abigail Masham, afforded him his opportunity of at once undermining the power of the Junto and securing his own aggrandisement. His great effort in 1707 failed; in 1710 he was completely successful. Widespread war-weariness, and the growing unpopularity of spectacular but costly and unprofitable victories and of high taxation, were the fundamental cause of his success; the Whig blunder in the impeachment of Sacheverell was but the fuel which transformed an already smouldering fire into a great conflagration. The Junto was routed, and Harley came into his own.

But it was Harley's misfortune that the completeness of his victory involved the defeat of his own policy. The *débâcle* of the one faction led to the triumph of the other. Only by means of conciliation and compromise could such a composite Ministry as Harley desired have been created. But the 'true-blue' Tories, exulting in the defeat of the Junto even more exuberantly than Harley himself—and the more extreme they were the more exuberant they became—were determined to reap the utmost possible party advantage from the consequences of the Sacheverell trial; and while Harley was still speaking of his intention of acting upon 'a Whig bottom' and negotiating with the moderate Whigs, they were insistently demanding a general election and were vindictively eager to oust their political opponents from every place of profit under the Crown, great and small together. The triumph of the Tories at the polls in 1711 put an end to all possibility of forming a non-party administration; Harley, despite himself, became the head of a definitely Tory combination, as we have already seen. Throughout his period of office during the last four

years of the Queen's life—and increasingly as time went on —Harley found himself in a false position. His ambitions were at last achieved: he had overthrown the Junto; he was Lord Treasurer of England.[1] No longer third in a triumvirate, he was unique and supreme. Yet he soon found the fruits for which he had longed turn bitter in his mouth. He had released forces which he could not control —forces which carried him forward more impetuously than he cared to travel, and on a course which he had never desired to take.

We are concerned with Robert Harley chiefly as the father of the second Earl of Oxford. The son, the whole family, all their relations and friends looked with pride upon one who had rendered the name of Harley truly illustrious. But once he had reached the zenith of his success in 1711, when he became Earl of Oxford and Mortimer[2] and Lord Treasurer, how rapid was his declension and how catastrophic his fall! To his family he seemed to be vilely persecuted by men and malevolently pursued by the fates. The one solid achievement of his Administration was the conclusion of the Treaty of Utrecht; but the actual negotiations were carried through by Bolingbroke as Secretary of State, and to him went the chief credit for the peace—or the chief discredit for it: for both the methods by which it was brought about and many of its provisions were strongly condemned by the Whigs, who were venomous, agile, and increasingly formidable in opposition. They were always finding fresh openings for attack. In particular they curried favour with the Electoral Court at Hanover, and Harley

[1] Defoe in his *Secret History of the White Staff* twice refers to him as Prime Minister. Oxford, and not Walpole (as is commonly supposed) was the first English statesman to whom the term was applied.

[2] The second title would appear to have been given by way of insurance, lest there might come forward a claimant to the earldom of Oxford, which had become extinct as recently as 1702, with the death of Aubrey de Vere, 20th Earl.

found that he, who had felt towards the Act of Settlement an almost possessional pride, was being represented as an enemy to the Protestant Succession!

Even worse than Whig foes without were Tory foes within. According to an interesting fragmentary account of public affairs jotted down by Lord Oxford at the beginning of February, 1711, 'Mr. Secretary St. John began listing a party, and set up for governing the House'.[1] Harley and St. John had heretofore been such close friends that they had been dubbed Castor and Pollux; but from this time onward their relations became more and more strained. In part the explanation is petty, unworthy jealousies on St. John's side. Absurd as it may seem, he was acutely envious of the burst of popularity which was aroused for Harley after the attempted assassination by Guiscard; he must needs claim that Guiscard had really meant to murder him, not the Lord Treasurer. When Harley was given an earldom, St. John must needs have a peerage too; when he was given a viscounty, not an earldom, he was very angry, and complained that his elevation was more of a punishment than a reward. He coveted a Garter, and when that dignity was not accorded him, he sulked again. Oxford averred that 'nothing could appease a restless, ambitious man'.[2] But the fundamental difference between the two men during the Tory Administration was that Oxford was not comfortable in a chariot of state drawn only by Tory horses, which, pulling with an undisciplined force, made the motion of the coach distinctly uneasy and violent. Bolingbroke felt no such sensations of uncertainty and disquietude as visited his colleague. Though it served his purpose in the reign of George II to elaborate in his work on the Patriot King the notions regarding party government which Oxford had

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. v, p. 464.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 466.

always entertained, he had no hesitation regarding the desirability of pursuing a whole-hearted Tory policy in present circumstances. Let the whole party drive ahead, united in its firm attachment to the Crown, to the Church, and to the interests of property! As he put it in a famous phrase, 'the landed men are the true owners of your political vessel'. He complained that Oxford was not leading the party; that he was acting as a mere looker-on. 'The sum of all his policy' was

> 'to amuse the whigs, the tories and the jacobites, as long as he could, and to keep his own power as long as he amused them. When it became impossible to amuse mankind any longer, he appeared plainly at the end of his line'.[1]

If Oxford would not boldly adopt a strong, unequivocal Tory policy, then he (Bolingbroke) would. The fulfilment of the policy might involve the overthrow of the Treasurer himself. Well, if he insisted on being an obstacle instead of a powerful aid to the full realisation of true Tory aims; if, having been presented with a Heaven-sent opportunity, he failed to recognise and to take advantage of it, whose fault was it but his own!

Matters speedily came to a climax in 1714. It is certainly true that Oxford was in large measure himself to blame. He had lost all his vigour; he seemed to be incapable of forming decisions. He had grown slack and slovenly in the conduct of business; he had grown dispirited. Even the most loyal of his friends did not know what to make of him. He left them befogged by his endless petty secrecies. Bolingbroke at last openly shewed his hand when he insisted upon the introduction of a Schism Bill, the object of which was to suppress those Nonconformist academies to which

[1] Bolingbroke, *Letter to Sir William Windham* in *Works* (ed. D. Mallet, 7 vols., 1754-98), vol. i, p. 19.

Oxford and many others not necessarily Nonconformists owed their education. As a thinker Bolingbroke was a Deist; but as a politician he was a strong Church of England man. He knew that the Lord Treasurer must be embarrassed beyond measure by the dilemma which the Bill involved, and which, had the latter any longer been master in his own house, he would never have allowed to be fabricated to his own undoing. Was he to oppose a Bill brought forward by his own ministers, and alienate the whole of his High Church following; or was he to advocate it, and estrange all the Dissenters, who had always trusted him? Oxford did neither; but during the debate on the measure in the Upper House sat 'dumb and swelling with a discontent that visibly spoke his affections to the Bill'.[1] Meanwhile the position of the Lord Treasurer had in other ways been undermined. Abigail Masham had transferred her allegiance from him to the more fascinating 'Man of Mercury'; the heart of the Queen had been turned against her servant. At last, at a stormy meeting of the Council on 27 July Oxford was dismissed. He fiercely attacked his colleagues; and the Queen fiercely attacked him, declaring that he had often come into her presence drunk, and that he had 'behaved himself towards her with bad manners, indecency, and disrespect'.[2]

Bolingbroke now had the opportunity to lead the Tory party whither he would. What he purposed we cannot tell —whether a Jacobite restitution, or such an aggrandisement of Tory power throughout the country that even a Hanoverian successor to the English throne could not have dispensed with it. Whatever his schemes, he had no time to carry them out, for less than five days after the dis-

[1] Defoe, *The Secret History of the White Staff* (1714), p. 33.

[2] See Swift's *Correspondence*, his *Behaviour of the Queen's last Ministry*, and *Free Thoughts upon the Present State of Affairs* in *Works*, vol. xvi, p. 162; vol. v, pp. 228-54, 260-322.

missal of Oxford Queen Anne lay dead. 'What a world is this! And how does Fortune banter us!' he exclaimed.[1] The accession of George I immediately brought complete triumph for the Whigs, and speedy impeachment for the late Tory leaders. Bolingbroke in March, 1715, fled to the Continent; but Oxford had never lacked either physical or moral courage: he stood his ground. On 20 July, 1715, he was formally impeached at the bar of the House of Lords of treason and of high crimes and misdemeanours.

Was it possible to make out any case against Oxford of having been guilty of treason? Before the impeachments had been decided upon, a Committee of Secrecy had been engaged in a protracted and most diligent enquiry into his conduct, in the hope of finding incriminating evidence. The methods whereby the peace negotiations which culminated in the Treaty of Utrecht had been inaugurated; the secret discussions with France behind the backs of our Dutch allies; the scarcely veiled attitude of hostility adopted to the Dutch from the beginning of the Tory Administration; the advice to the Crown to create twelve peers at the end of 1711 for the express party purpose of securing the approval of the preliminaries of peace by the Upper House—these must form the most effective charges to bring against the Earl of Oxford. It was certainly feasible on such a foundation to base an accusation of neglect of duty or worse, amounting to high crimes and misdemeanours; but was it possible to go farther and discover any real substance to justify a charge of treason? Oxford and Bolingbroke had both been in correspondence with the Jacobites in France, but how far had they gone; had there been anything criminal in their negotiations? Had there

[1] Swift's *Works*, vol. xvi, p. 173. The commonly accepted view that Bolingbroke was more deeply implicated than Oxford in Jacobite intrigue in the last three or four years of the reign of Anne has recently been challenged in an interesting article by Prof. H. N. Fieldhouse, in *English Historical Review*, vol. lii, pp. 443-59.

been any positive design on the part of both statesmen, or either of them, for reinstating the exiled line? We know a good deal more to-day than the Committee of Secrecy was able to discover, and even yet—at any rate in Oxford's case—it is extremely difficult to answer this question with any degree of certainty. He had without doubt been in touch with the Jacobites abroad; but was his object anything more than to secure—as he did secure—their recommendation to the Jacobites at home to give their votes to the Tory Ministry? It is quite clear that while the comments of the Pretender's entourage on Oxford's conduct reveal alternate spasms of hope and disappointment, on the whole they were discouraged. Their general impression is best summed up in the Jacobite report, 'Overton [as he is described in cypher] is ill of his eyes, and the eyes of his understanding are worse.'[1] Oxford could never be induced to do more than sit on the fence. He was corresponding latterly at one and the same time with the Jacobites, in case there might be a restoration not of his devising; and with Halifax, with a view to a junction with some of his Whig friends, in the event of the Hanoverian successor-designate coming to his own.[2]

The Whigs persisted in impeaching Oxford of treason as well as of high crimes and misdemeanours; but they never discovered any evidence to prove their charge. During the interval between the date (10 June) on which the House of Commons had resolved upon his impeachment and the exhibiting of the articles against him in the House of Lords a month later, Oxford conducted himself with calm dignity, quietly preparing his defence. When the House of Lords

[1] James Macpherson, *Original Papers containing the secret history of Great Britain* (2 vols., 1775), vol. ii, p. 421.

[2] *English Historical Review*, 1915, pp. 501-18; Appendix E in Trevelyan's *The Peace and the Protestant Succession* (1934); *Portland MSS.*, vol. v, pp. 437, 451.

decided that he should be committed to the safe custody of the Tower, he went thither on 27 July in his own coach, accompanied by members of his family, and followed by a crowd crying 'Down with the Whigs'. For many months no progress was made in bringing forward his case. It was not until 24 June, 1717, that the trial opened in Westminster Hall. Harcourt, his principal champion, fully appreciating the weakness of the prosecutor's position, moved in the House of Lords that the Commons should not be permitted to proceed with the charge of high crimes and misdemeanours until the more serious charge had been tried. He knew well that, should Oxford be acquitted of treason (as he was bound to be), the subsequent proceedings of the enemy, even on the more venial accusation, would be embarrassed. His motion was carried by eighty-eight votes to fifty-six. The dictation by the Lords of the methods to be adopted gave great umbrage to the Lower House, as had happened in previous impeachments. It refused to accept the Peers' ruling, and when on 1 July the latter solemnly repaired to Westminster Hall and called upon the Commons to make good their articles of impeachment, no prosecutors appeared. Thereupon the Lords withdrew to their own House and unanimously declared the Earl of Oxford acquitted.[1] The farce was ended, but its victim had endured two years of incarceration and suspense.

The events in the career of the first Earl of Oxford thus briefly summarised are not irrelevant to our story. It is impossible to read the correspondence of young Edward Harley and the other members of his family without realising that these happenings were constantly in their minds. The Lord Treasurer's greatness was their immense

[1] See *Portland MSS.*, vol. v, pp. 529-32; *Lords' Journals*, vol. xx, p. 572; *Commons' Journals*, vol. xiii, p. 609; *Parl. Hist.*, vol. vii, pp. 494-6; A. S. Turberville, *The House of Lords in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1927), pp. 162-3.

pride; his fall and his impeachment were their horrible oppression. For to them and to their numerous friends, whatever the rest of the world might decide, he was the most splendid and beneficent of statesmen, as well as the wisest of parents and kindest of comrades and patrons. And posterity may well remember, as they did, his admirable qualities—his genuine and very remarkable affection and sympathy for the common people of England; his keen appreciation of the power of the press, and vigorous and discerning utilisation of it; his real flair for discovering the trend of public opinion; and his constant zeal for keeping himself informed of it through the instrumentality of such diligent agents as Defoe and other enquirers, so that his brother Edward claimed that no one since Secretary Walsingham had ever kept himself possessed of better intelligence.[1] And in private life, apart from his fondness for the bottle, Oxford's conduct was entirely exemplary, and indeed entirely attractive. He loved the society of men of letters and of learning; he enjoyed his game of bowls, and the quietest and most domestic kind of simple pleasures. There was indeed a strange contrast between the open ingenuousness of his family life and his habit of tortuous and secretive dealing as a Minister of State. Swift remarked that Oxford had 'the greatest inequalities of any man alive.'

There is no doubt that both physical and moral decay were assailing the Lord Treasurer at all events during the last year of his administration, and probably longer. Lethargy and intemperance were alike growing upon him; and, though he faced the ordeal of his impeachment and

[1] See G. M. Trevelyan, *Ramillies*, p. 330. Prof. Trevelyan (*ibid.*, p. 17) writes: 'Harley had Chatham's vision of the real workaday England that was hidden from partisan politicians and fashionable place-hunters. But he had not Chatham's power of expressing the vision that he saw.'

imprisonment with serenity and resolution, the strain to which he was then subjected completed his deterioration. There is real pathos in the letters which he wrote in the Tower. He is continually thinking of the son and the daughter-in-law whom he loves so tenderly and the support afforded him by his friends; but he is under the sore burden of pain and disease. His limbs are affected, his hand is weak, so that he can write only with difficulty and discomfort. Pope eulogised his heroism in adversity:

> A soul supreme, in each hard interest tried,
> Above all Pain, all Passion, and all Pride,
> The rage of power, the blast of public breath,
> The lust of lucre, and the dread of death.[1]

But Oxford's weakness as well as his strength became only too sadly apparent to those who were most intimate with him in his declining years, when he found his chief comfort in the solicitous care of his son and of his dear Harriet; and he felt better when he stayed with them at Wimpole than in the solitude of Brampton.[2] He wrote a few months before his death,

> 'I desire the most munificent God our Father would reward the best of Women and Daughters and the best Son with every Bounty He sees needful to you both.'[3]

Only once or twice after his release did he emerge from his retirement to take part in debate in the House of Lords; otherwise he disappeared entirely from the public view.

The Harleys were a very united, loyal and affectionate family. The head of their house was beloved by all his

[1] Pope's *Works* (ed. Elwin and Courthope), vol. iii, p. 192.

[2] Welbeck MSS., Abigail Harley to Lord Harley, 27 August, 1723. Pope also wrote: 'He would have sat out the storm, let the danger be what it would. He was a steady man, and had a great firmness of soul, and would have died unconcernedly; or perhaps, like Sir Thomas More, with a jest in his mouth.'

[3] *Ibid.*, Earl of Oxford to Lord Harley, 20 November, 1723.

relatives during his life, and his memory was venerated after his death. Wimpole passed into other hands; and in her widowhood Henrietta, who took the utmost pride in all her ancestors on either side, made Welbeck an ancestral shrine, and collected in it many memorials of her father-in-law. On its walls hung portraits of the great Lord Treasurer, of Prior, and other of his devoted friends, and here were stored—as they still are—his numerous private papers. The result is that not even the first Duke of Newcastle himself has his personality more strongly imprinted on Welbeck than has Robert Harley. If he was not an inmate of the house in life, the filial piety of Henrietta gave him after death a permanent denization there.

A few words in brief ought to be said about one other member of the Harley family, because he too comes into our story, so constantly was he consulted both by his brother and his nephew. Indeed this Edward Harley seems to have been so admirable a man of affairs, so sagacious of judgment, and so unselfish in the employment of his time, that no family business was ever undertaken without his advice and indefatigable assistance. Educated at Westminster School, he was a barrister of the Middle Temple. He was a strong supporter of William of Orange at the time of the Revolution. In 1691 he became Recorder of Leominster, and in 1698 Member of Parliament for Leominster. In 1702 he was appointed to the important and remunerative position of Auditor of the Imprest,[1] and this he held until his death. When the motion for Oxford's impeachment was brought forward by Lord Coningsby in June, 1715, he spoke (though it would appear not very effectively) in his brother's defence. He was himself

[1] The Auditor of the Imprest was an officer of the Exchequer concerned with the accounts of Ireland and of the Mint, and with moneys imprested, or advanced, to individuals for purposes of Government business.

marked out for attack; and in 1717 he was accused of embezzlement. There was nothing to justify this accusation except partisan hostility to the Harleys, and the Auditor was able to shew that, although many millions of public money had passed through his hands in the fifteen years during which he had held his office, his accounts were correct in every single particular, except for an item of three shillings and fourpence due to the error of a clerk.[1]

Edward Harley was not only an invaluable public servant; he was a man full of many good works, especially prominent in the development of the Charity Schools movement. He founded one Charity School at Brampton and maintained several others; and he became chairman of the trustees of the Charity Schools in London. It is impossible to read the Auditor's letters among the Welbeck papers, or the numerous references to his activities in helping his relatives out of their troubles, without realising that here was a man of sterling worth. The tribute to this good man's memory over his monument records:

> In 1702 he was advanced by Queen Anne,
> To be one of the Auditors of the Imprest,
> Which important Place he executed to his Death,
> With great Care, Integrity, and Ability;
> And, by his Regulation of the National Accounts,
> His Service to the Public remains after his Death.
> Yet his Assiduity in Civil Employments
> Neither lessen'd his Attention to Religion,
> Nor interrupted his daily Course of Devotion;
> The Discharge of his Duty as a Christian,
> Was the Source and Centre of his Desires.
> His Hospitality was great,
> His Liberality greater,
> His Charity private and without Ostentation,
> Nor ever made known but where it could not be concealed.[2]

[1] See *D.N.B.*, vol. xxiv, p. 394.

[2] Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

Chapter XIII

EDWARD HARLEY, SECOND EARL OF OXFORD
EARLY LIFE AND MARRIAGE

Edward, the eldest son of Robert Harley by his first wife, the daughter of Thomas Foley, of Witley Court in Worcestershire, was born in 1689. There is a rather quaint and delightful letter written to him by his grandfather on 18 April, 1696. In the previous February the assassination plot against the King's life had been discovered, and as a security Parliament had drawn up a bond of Association, declaring William to possess a right by law to the crown of England, and that neither King James nor the pretended Prince of Wales had any right to it whatsoever. This Association was signed by nearly all officers of the Crown and by members of both Houses of Parliament, and also by innumerable people all over the country and in English possessions abroad, who in a passion of loyalty, awakened by the news of the dastardly plot, flocked to churches or to other places where the form of Association was displayed, to attest their allegiance and their detestation of the would-be assassins. Among those who signed the form was the six-year-old Edward Harley. The grandfather's letter starts with a mild reprimand:

'I have expected, Ned Harley Junior, this many weeks a Letter from you, of your inditing, tho' not of

your writing; 'tis time for you to learn to write, for wch you are already big enough.'

He then goes on:

'I hear you have made shift to write your name to the Association, now you must learn betimes to know the meaning of it, wch is, to promise to be a true Englishman to defend the good Laws & Liberties of your Country, and especially to be a good Christian, to oppose all Superstition and Idolatry, especially that of Popery.'

He proceeds to use his opportunity to point a moral.

'Now that you may do your duty therein, you must humbly and constantly pray to God to give you Grace to keep your first Association, when you were in Baptism devoted and ingaged to be a sworn Soldier to the King of Kings, the Lord Jesus Christ, and to fight against the Enemies of his Kingdom, the World, the Flesh & the Devill; therefore you must daily pray that you may find the Kingdom of God come with power into your soul, that vain thoughts & fleshly lusts that war against the soul may not lodge in your heart.'

Finally, he exhorts Ned to pray with reverence to God every day, and to learn the Catechism, the Psalms, and the first chapter of the book of Proverbs by heart.[1]

Two years later the grandfather addresses a similar exhortation to Ned, dealing with a Christian's conversation. He concludes,

'Now the Lord grant that you may savingly know that Religion is not a meer Profession or Form of Devotion but it is a constant way of Faith & Love in obedience to God's Commandments.'[2]

[1] Welbeck MSS., Sir Edward Harley to his grandson, 18 April, 1696.

[2] *Ibid.*, Sir Edward Harley to his grandson, 9 July, 1698.

If the boy did not grow up in piety and godliness it was not for lack of his grandfather's admonitions; but the latter cannot have been a lasting influence in young Edward's life, for he was only eleven years old when Sir Edward Harley died.

Young Edward was educated at Westminster School, where, perhaps because it was so convenient for Members of Parliament to send their sons, so many distinguished men went in the eighteenth century. In some miscellaneous, and very fragmentary, biographical notes the second Earl of Oxford tells us that when he went to Westminster he boarded with a certain Mrs. Beresford, and that he was under the sub-master for two years and a half. 'I have all the reason in the world, to esteem it the happiest thing that could befall me,'[1] he writes. Numerous letters exist written to him while he was a schoolboy at Westminster by his aunt, Abigail Harley; but they tell us nothing except that she was a very affectionate and devoted aunt, as indeed all her later letters also attest. She assured him in a letter written in 1717 that she had always had the greatest affection for him from his birth, both by blood and inclination;[2] and five years later she attributed her continued affection for him to his goodness to her. 'Could you look into my heart you would find the deepest impression of your kindness of which I have had numberless instances, and 'tis no small pleasure that you indulge a poor old scrub in writing often to you. . . .'[3]

Harley seems to have retained a genuine affection for his old school: he maintained contact with it in later life,

[1] From a manuscript at Welbeck.

[2] Welbeck MSS., Abigail Hill to her nephew Edward Harley, 30 July, 1717.

[3] *Ibid.*, Abigail Harley to Edward Harley, 27 Feb., 1721/22. Cf. 21 Dec., 1725: 'I cannot think of your tenderness to me without the greatest gratitude first to God . . . and then to your Lordsp that make the Dregs of already a long life easy & pleasant.'

for many years having the Commemoration verses sent to him, and keeping in touch with a circle of old Westminster masters and boys such as Robert Freind, Vincent Bourne, the younger Samuel Wesley,[1] and William Dowdeswell. His chaplain, Timothy Thomas, had been at Westminster and Christ Church.

From Westminster Edward went up to Christ Church, Oxford, in 1707. There were complaints of the irregularity of his attendance at lectures;[2] but he at any rate showed a genuine love of books, and he began to run up considerable bills both for books and for book-binding—so large indeed that he confessed to his father his folly in giving such large orders.[3] Among the books specified in the bills are a number of Greek and Latin texts, and primers of algebra and Euclid; but there are also the works of Chillingworth and Hooker, the sermons of Atterbury, the poems of Shakespeare and Dryden, Perrault's *Architecture*, and plans of Lille and Oudenarde.[4] Dr. Freind, the Headmaster of Westminster, wrote to him in September, 1708, when he was spending the Long Vacation with his father at Brampton Bryan, 'I am glad to hear you took such good companions with you to Bramton, if you can converse with books there where you have so much good company you'll never lay 'em aside anywhere else.' He reckons, says Dr. Freind, that Edward has now conquered Greek so far as to be able to read it with some pleasure, if not with the same facility as Latin.[5] Edward Harley went down from Oxford in December, 1711. In an unaddressed letter, intended presumably for Dr. Stratford, Canon of Christ Church, his

[1] Wesley addressed many occasional verses to members of the Harley family. A number of poems in his handwriting are at Welbeck.

[2] *Portland MSS.*, vol. vii, p. xvii.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. xviii.

[4] Welbeck MSS., Bills for books.

[5] *Ibid.*, 25 September, 1708.

From a painting by M. Dahl

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father says he cannot allow his son to quit the college without expressing his indebtedness for

> 'the tender regard you have ever showed him, w^ch^ I esteem as the dearest marks of your friendship to me, and as He will, I hope, enjoy the benefit of your instruction and counsel his whole life; so I shal always preserve the sense of my obligation to you'.[1]

No sooner had Edward completed his University career than he was brought into Parliament. His father had already begun to make arrangements for this in the previous June. On his own elevation to the House of Lords a vacancy occurred in the representation of Radnorshire. The new Earl of Oxford considered that it would be proper to keep up the family interest there, and to have his son chosen for that constituency.[2] Edward, now Lord Harley, was duly elected, and he sat for Radnorshire from 1711 till 1714. With the advent of the Hanoverian dynasty the house of Harley fell under a cloud. Lord Oxford was impeached and sent to the Tower, and Lord Harley was not returned to the Parliament at the first general election of the new reign. His father complained indignantly of the Sheriff of Radnorshire showing partiality and acting 'in an unexampled manner'.[3] In 1722 Harley succeeded in returning to the House of Commons, and he represented Cambridgeshire for the next two years. But he never made any mark in Parliament, in either Chamber, and indeed he does not appear to have had any political ambitions. His wish was always to be among his books; Dr. Freind's prediction was abundantly justified that he would never lay them aside.

We have already seen, in discussing the various proposals that were made to John, Duke of Newcastle, for the

[1] Welbeck MSS., 27 Dec., 1711. [2] *Ibid.*, 5 June, 1711.

[3] *Ibid.*, 14 Feb., 1714/15. The last three letters quoted were all left unaddressed by the Earl of Oxford.

hand of his only daughter, Henrietta, that in October, 1710, when Edward Harley was still an undergraduate at Oxford, a suggestion as to his marriage was made to his uncle, the Auditor, by a wealthy London citizen; and that the Duke of Newcastle, having first sent for the Auditor and told him that his nephew ought to look much higher, subsequently saw the Earl of Oxford, and gave him the impression that he had in mind an alliance between Lord Harley and his own daughter. The Auditor tells us that Newcastle had always adhered to Oxford 'with a very entire friendship'; and that his death was to the Lord Treasurer 'as the loss of a right hand'. Immediately the Duke met with his accident in Sherwood Forest, the Duchess conveyed the news to the Earl. When the Duke died, Oxford ended a letter of condolence by saying that 'the duty I owe to the memory of the great man who is gone, obliges me to beseech you most freely to lay your commands upon me'.[1]

The Duchess of Newcastle took the Lord Treasurer at his word. When she discovered the terms of her late husband's will she was indignant beyond measure. She was immediately resolved to dispute its validity, and, as the Queen's chief Minister of State had so obligingly made such an offer of his services, she was delighted to be able to avail herself of such valuable assistance in what now became the consuming passion of her life. We find him writing to the Duchess on 7 August, 1711:

> 'It is not possible for me to find words to express the great honour you have done me by the letters I have received. I shall not fail by my actions to show the sense I have of your goodness. The esteem and perfect friendship I had for the Duke obliged me to be your and your family's servant, but you have by this additional con-

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 230.

fidence, tied me in indissoluble bonds to your Grace and to your interest.'[1]

The story of the disputed will is long and complicated, but it is an important episode in the history of Welbeck. It will therefore be simplest and most satisfactory to take it as a whole afterwards; and, although the question of the Harley-Holles marriage was closely bound up with it, to deal with the marriage first by itself. Oxford was naturally eager to secure the splendid match for his son which he believed—possibly on quite insufficient evidence—that the Duke of Newcastle had definitely intended to arrange. The Duke having died, it became necessary to be on good terms with the Duchess. He was predisposed to accept her view of the will which she regarded as so outrageous, more particularly as it was disadvantageous to the daughter as well as to the widow. He was anxious, as no doubt any other friend would have been, to help her by obtaining the best legal advice. This he did; and the Duchess seems to have been properly appreciative of his support. There seemed, then, to be every reason to be optimistic about the realisation of the marriage project.

Possibly even before there had been any question of Lord Oxford assisting the Duchess in her campaign to impugn the will, the latter was disposed to give her blessing to the match. At any rate the Auditor tells us that upon the interment of the Duke in Westminster Abbey, he was approached by his Grace's chaplain, Mr. Matthew Brailsford, and by his secretary, Mr. Wenman, who

'having talked very largely of what they apprehended was the Duke's intention in relation to the match, said, they did not doubt it was also the Duchess's intention, and therefore mentioned that the Lord Treasurer should write to the Duchess on that subject'.

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 230.

When the Auditor recounted this conversation to his brother, Oxford objected that neither he nor any one else had an estate 'adequate to the fortune' of Lady Henrietta. He felt, therefore, that he was not in a position to make any formal proposition, particularly since 'in the station he was in, it would be dishonourable to make a proposal that might be rejected'. Edward Harley therefore went back to Mr. Brailsford and Mr. Wenman, and asked them when they returned to Welbeck to mention the matter to her Grace. If she were sounded verbally and in this indirect manner, were the suggestion to be disagreeable to her, she need take no further notice of it.

The Auditor soon after this received letters from both the chaplain and the secretary, to say that they had alluded to the question of the match, and that the Duchess viewed it with approval. In particular she had commanded Mr. Wenman to say that her opinion of the Lord Treasurer was 'that he can never fall so low, but that his great capacity will make him superior to any person in England'. Later on the Duchess herself wrote to say that she desired Oxford to secure the title of Duke of Newcastle for himself, and also the Wardenship of the Forest of Sherwood, which her husband had held. How could she more plainly have indicated that she regarded the fortunes of the two families as already interlinked? With such encouragement the Lord Treasurer and his brother spoke openly to the Duchess about the match; and she now said that, as it had been the Duke's intention, so it was hers. She even went so far as to instruct the Auditor to advise with counsel how the marriage settlements might be arranged during Lady Henrietta's nonage.[1]

So far had negotiations proceeded that the tongue of rumour began to wag. On 8 November, Swift recorded in his Journal: 'Lord Ashburnham told me today at the coffee-house, that Lord Harley was yesterday morning

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. v, p. 658.

married to the Duke of Newcastle's daughter, the great heiress, and is got about all the town.' Swift knew that this story was not true, for he had himself been with Lord Harley the previous day. But he hoped and expected that the report would very soon be justified, 'for I know it has been privately managing this long time'.[1]

Then came the hitch. The Duchess's campaign to upset the will did not prosper. She was ordered by the Court of Chancery to produce a deed in her possession which was vital to the case. She categorically refused to do so, and was determined to appeal against the order to the House of Lords. She told the Earl of Oxford that her cause was his cause, and that she expected him to appear in personal support of her appeal in the House of Lords. The attitude now adopted by the Duchess was as unreasonable as it was unwise. To refuse to produce important evidence when called upon to do so; to flout the Court of Chancery; to lodge an appeal to which there could be but one answer; to expect the chief Minister of the Crown to support her in this course, in a case in which he was known to be at any rate prospectively interested, and so to put himself in a position at once false and ridiculous—no conduct could have been more rash or preposterous. Oxford was naturally, and very properly, adamant in declining to carry out the Duchess's wishes; and he did his best to dissuade her from her headstrong course: but in vain. Edward Harley the elder remarked to his brother that if he persisted in his refusal to further the Duchess's plans, he had better abandon any expectation of the match ever taking place. The Lord Treasurer 'remained firm in his resolution'.[2]

The Duchess had been an angry woman when she first took up arms in defence of what she considered to be her rights; when she found the Court of Chancery behaving in

[1] *Journal to Stella* in *Works*, vol. ii, p. 398.

[2] *Portland MSS.*, vol. v, p. 658.

a troublesome manner, she became angrier still; and when she resolved to defy the Court, and was thwarted by the man whom she had regarded as her most powerful ally, the man who had actually volunteered for that position, her rage boiled over. Whatever she may have thought of the Harleys before this time, she made no secret of her opinion of them afterwards, loudly proclaiming her abhorrence of them. If a marriage took place between her daughter and Lord Harley, it certainly would not be countenanced by her.

Nevertheless the marriage did take place. Henrietta showed at this crisis in her life singular determination and presence of mind. It is possible that her mother had always been difficult to live with, and in her present state of constant passion and irritation was hardly to be endured, so that she was in any case anxious to leave the household; it may be that she had already formed a genuine affection for Lord Harley and his father. At any rate she was resolved to marry Edward, and on 31 August, 1713, marry him she did. Her mother parted with her in 'great displeasure', and having showed her much 'harsh treatment'.[1] The 'wicked marriage', as the Duchess termed it, took place in the drawing-room of the house at Wimpole. As the bridegroom recorded, 'I was married between 11 & 12 o'clock at noon to the Lady Henrietta Cavendishe Holles by Dr. Mat. Brailsford Dean of Welles. Lord Cheney gave her. Ld Treasurer, Mr. Auditor Harley, Mr. John Morley, Mr. William Wenman, Mrs. Anne Grant, and Mrs. Judith Brown were present in the Drawing Room at Wimple in Cambridgeshire. Ld Cheney went away before dinner.'[2] Letters were immediately sent off to the Duchess,

[1] *Portland MSS.*, p. 659.

[2] From the second Earl of Oxford's Diary. MS. at Welbeck; *Letters at Welbeck*, p. 98. Brailsford had become Dean of Wells shortly before the marriage. For John Morley, see *infra*, p. 342 and n. Lord Cheyne was the son of Lady Jane Cavendish, whose husband, Charles Cheyne, had become Viscount Newhaven after her death.

Matthew Prior, 1664–1721
from a painting by J. Richardson, 1718

in an attempt to propitiate her, but she remained implacable.

Lord Harley's marriage gave the greatest satisfaction to all his relations and friends, and congratulations poured in upon his father and himself. The Queen sent her felicitations to her Lord Treasurer; men of letters—Swift, Prior, Arbuthnot—sent theirs to their patron and benefactor.[1] Oxford himself expressed his great joy in his son's happy marriage. He looked upon Lady 'Harriot' and loved her as he did his son; he desired 'that all that affection which has made our family happy in uniting us together, may meet in Dear Lady Henrietta'.[2] The Auditor, writing on the first anniversary of the wedding, in language which recalls the epistolary style of his father, after alluding to 'the matchless Excellencies of my lady', which gives her husband 'a happiness too great to be fully described', goes on to say: 'As this was the immediate Bounty of Providence I doubt not your lordship will from the sense of it be engaged to make due returns to the divine Majesty for so great a Blessing by consecrating all to the service and Glory of our great Benefactor.' He asks pardon for writing 'in this unusual manner, which is too often impiously called cant'.[3]

The great marriage alliance with the heiress of the Duke of Newcastle had, then, been achieved. It was a great *coup* for the Earl of Oxford, and the union seems to have been a happy one, likely to please all those who had a sincere desire for the welfare of bride and bridegroom. 'Lord Harley is a very valuable young gentleman', Swift had quaintly written in reference to the rumour of a marriage in November, 1711, 'and they say the girl is handsome, and

[1] Welbeck MSS., Swift also celebrated the occasion in a high-flown congratulatory poem addressed to the bridegroom.

[2] *Ibid.*, First Earl of Oxford to his son, 5 Sept., 1713.

[3] *Ibid.*, 31 Aug., 1714.

has good sense, but red hair.'[1] Great promise on the one side, good sense and good looks on the other—nothing marred the marriage except the red hair, and even that many would regard as a recommendation. And yet there were troubles for the newly married couple: the estrangement with the Duchess, even if she was not greatly beloved or lovable, had serious practical, apart from sentimental, disadvantages; and there was the protracted and exceedingly expensive litigation in which Lord Harley now became personally involved. The hand of Henrietta had been much sought after because it had been popularly supposed that she was the greatest heiress in England, perhaps even in Europe; and when Oxford had first contemplated the alliance he had no doubt shared that belief with the Count of the Empire, the Duke of Somerset, the Duke of Leeds, old Lady Strafford, and all the others who had entertained hopes of a highly profitable matrimonial *coup*. But when the Duke of Newcastle's will became known, it was discovered that, although Henrietta's portion was considerable, she was by no means the great heiress of universal expectation. It had been anticipated that she would, ultimately at all events, become possessor of all her father's estates, being his only child; but that was not the purport of the remarkable will which the Duke had made on 29 August, 1707.

We must now consider the principal provisions of the will; the litigation to which it gave rise; and the final settlement of a highly complicated dispute. The most material provisions of the will were as follows. The Duke left to his wife his recently purchased mansion-house called Orton House, together with all his lands at Orton or

[1] *Works*, vol. ii, p. 398. See *ibid.*, vol. i, p. 177, Sir Walter Scott's comment on the invidious suggestion of the historian, Oldmixon, that Swift owed his deanery to the assistance he gave to Oxford in the negotiation preceding the marriage.

The Right Honorable the Lord Treasurer Debtor to
Doctor Jonathan Swift.

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in the county of Huntingdon, with the right to dispose of them as she thought fit. But he expressed a wish that she should dispose of this estate to their daughter, 'if by her Duty and Obedience to her Mother she shall merit and deserve the same'. He devised to his daughter and her heirs for ever all his

> 'Honours, Castles, Manors, Lordships, Lands, Tenements and Hereditaments whatsoever, and all my Lease-hold and Copy-hold Lands, and Tenements whatsoever, situate, lying and being in the several and respective counties of Stafford, York and Northumberland, any or either of them (except any such Lands and Hereditaments, as well Lease-hold and Copy-hold as Free-Hold)'

as were of his own purchasing in Yorkshire; and, in addition, the sum of £20,000, which was due to be paid to her by his marriage settlement. But there was an important proviso to these gifts and devises to Lady Henrietta. They were to

> 'cease and be utterly void, to all Intents and Purposes whatsoever',

if she were to die unmarried or before she attained the age of twenty-one, or, (and this is the important condition) should enter upon or sue for any other part of his real estate. As for the remainder of his real estate—his honours, castles, manors, lordships, manor-houses, parks, chases, lands, tenements, rectories, advowsons, rents, and hereditaments, wheresoever they might be, together with all rights and appurtenances belonging to them, they were to go, in the first place, to Thomas Pelham, the eldest son of Lord Pelham (the Duke's brother-in-law by his marriage to Grace Holles), and to the aforesaid Thomas Pelham's male issue; failing such issue, to Henry Pelham, his younger brother,

and to Henry Pelham's male issue; failing such issue, to William Vane, second son of Christopher, Lord Barnard, and his male issue; failing such issue, to Gilbert, the eldest son of Lord Barnard, and his male issue. In default of such heirs to the 'right heirs' of the testator. It was made a condition that Thomas Pelham, or whosoever succeeded to these estates under the terms of the will, must take the name of Holles; and

> 'in all Deeds, Writings, Letters and other Instruments of Writing, be styled or called by the Name of Holles, and Sett, Subscribe or Write his Name Holles, to all and every such Deeds, Writings, Letters and Instruments'.

The use of all gold and silver plate was given to the Duchess; but not the power to dispose of them: for on her death they were to go to Thomas Pelham or whosoever should at that time be in possession of the properties devised to him with remainders as aforesaid.

The Duke appointed as his executors the Duchess, Lord Pelham, and Henry Paget, afterwards Lord Paget. It is not surprising that the Duchess took the greatest exception to this will, both on her own behalf, and on that of her daughter, who, as Swift expressed it, was 'cheated by her father'. The Duchess's main contention was that her husband had no right to include any of the Cavendish estates at all in his will. They were settled by the will of Duke Henry, which left them to his daughter Margaret and her heirs. Furthermore, by that will it was made an absolute condition that whosoever enjoyed those estates must take the name of Cavendish, and that he must also keep them entire and undivided. Consequently, even supposing Duke John had any right to dispose of the Cavendish estates at all, he was precluded from dividing them, as he had done; while his proviso regarding the taking of the name of Holles was in complete contradiction to the proviso made by Duke Henry.

It will be observed that Duke John did not distinguish, as he very well might have done, between the Holles estates, which he had inherited from his father and from Lord Holles of Ifield, on the one hand, which he had an undoubted right to dispose of at will, and the Cavendish estates, on the other hand, which he had enjoyed simply in virtue of his marriage to Margaret Cavendish. The Duchess relied upon her father's will of 26 July, 1691, in her contention that her husband had not been entitled to ignore this distinction, and to leave to Thomas Pelham some of the Cavendish estates as well as the Holles estates. For want of this vital distinction her husband's will was merely 'a piece of paper called a will', 'a pretended will'. She was probably mortified enough by the Holles properties being willed away from herself and her daughter to a mere nephew; the alienation of even some of her own family's property she regarded as altogether monstrous.

The Duchess's first steps were taken with the assistance of Lord Oxford and his brother. Together they perused a boxful of papers which she sent the Lord Treasurer, including the 'pretended will'. It at once appeared to them that the repugnance between Duke John's insistence upon the name of Holles being taken and Duke Henry's insistence upon the name of Cavendish was an important point in her Grace's favour.[1] But theirs was only layman's opinion, and they proceeded to seek expert advice on the Duchess's behalf. They found that Lord Pelham had already retained the Attorney-General as counsel. Oxford had a talk with the latter, and from him for the first time discovered upon what the opposing interest based their case. The Attorney-General informed the Lord Treasurer that Lord Pelham had been assured by a Mr. William Jessopp, a man of business to the late Duke, that there existed a

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 231, Earl of Oxford to Duchess of Newcastle, 11 Aug. and 14 Aug., 1711.

deed whereby all rights over the property had been vested in the Duke. He referred to the all-important deed of 17 January, 1693.[1] Oxford retorted that it was incredible that the late Duke would have asked, or the Duchess consented, to alter the settlement which her father had determined upon. The Attorney-General admitted the force of the argument, and said he wished for a compromise.[2]

Lord Oxford was not himself at this stage in the proceedings thinking of a compromise, any more than the Duchess. He congratulated her on her 'wonderful exactness in business', on her 'indefatigable pains'; and he said he hoped that God would bless her with success suitable, not only to the justice of her cause, but to her 'own superior justice and resolution'. A few days later he reiterated his admiration. Every letter he received from the Duchess, he exclaimed, increased his wonder at the great application, knowledge, and sagacity she displayed in the prudent conduct of her present affairs. But he was obviously a little anxious about the stipulation in Duke Henry's will that those succeeding to his estates must take the name of Cavendish, and he suggested that it would be a good thing for Lady Henrietta to write to as many of her relations as possible signing herself *Cavendish*. He did not think there could be any objection to her joining *Holles* to it. At the same time he was in correspondence with Lord Pelham, and he expressed his astonishment that anyone could set up a claim to disturb the Duchess, not only in the Cavendish estate to which she was entitled by inheritance, but in the Clare estate also, which was due to her by merit.[3]

Lord Pelham naturally took a very different view of the situation. Great estates had been left to his son by the late Duke; and he was not disturbed either by sentimental

[1] See *supra*, p. 225.

[2] *Portland MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 231.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 232: 20, 25 Aug., 1 Sept., 1711.

commiseration for the aggrieved widow or, in all probability, by much apprehension of her being able to prevent his son's complete enjoyment of the good fortune which was in prospect for him. He hoped that some sort of accommodation might be come to; but when it became obvious from the completely intractable attitude adopted by the Duchess that there was no possibility of this, he was perhaps not ill pleased. The Pelhams might have had to yield something voluntarily by agreement; they stood to get all that was bestowed upon them by the will as the result of a contest. He wrote very cheerfully to 'Dear Tommy' on 17 October, 1711, recognising that the Duchess might 'outmanage' her opponents, but confident that all would be well because of the strength of their cause.[1]

In order to invalidate her late husband's will the Duchess had endeavoured to show that he was not in a fit state to make one in August, 1707. Cited to appear in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, and to bring the will of her late husband to be proved, after great delays she had reluctantly complied. The evidence had been heard, but nothing further had happened. There exist notes of the depositions of the principal witnesses—Peter Reeves, one of the Duke's gentlemen; John Twibell, the clerk of the kitchen; Matthew Brailsford, the chaplain; Peter Walter, the lawyer who had drawn up the will; and William Morgan, his clerk.[2]

Reeves' evidence was as follows. One day in August or September, 1707—he could not now remember which—a servant of the late Duke of Newcastle summoned him to the library at Welbeck. When he entered the Duke said, 'You must be a witness.' The Duke had before him several sheets of paper, to which, taking a pen in his hand, he wrote and subscribed his own name. The deponent was too far from the desk actually to see the name on the paper.

[1] Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 30,064. *Newcastle Papers*, vol. ccclxxx, f.1.

[2] Add. MS. 33,137, ff. 218-21.

When he had finished writing, the Duke took off a seal on wax, which had been dropped on the document, and holding up the paper in his hand, said, 'I deliver this as my act and deed.' The deponent could not actually see that the document was a will, because it was folded over; but he believed that the will now exhibited to him was the same writing that was executed by the Duke in his presence. The Duke appeared to be of good understanding and spoke sensibly, as far as Reeves could observe. Under interrogation the witness admitted that in or about August, 1707, the Duke had been seized with an apoplexy at Welbeck, or so it was reported in the house; and it was also rumoured that he was in great danger of death.

William Morgan, clerk to Peter Walter, gave evidence similar to Reeves'. In particular he stated that his Grace was of perfectly sound mind and memory, so far as he observed, and as he verily believed.

John Twibell, on the other hand, while telling the same story of being summoned to the Welbeck library and seeing the Duke writing something, did not remember whether he signed or not; did not realise that the document was a will; and stated that the Duke spoke low and looked ill, having just had a violent fit of apoplexy. He was unable to declare, therefore, that the Duke was at the time of perfect mind and memory. Being interrogated, Twibell further asserted that the very day before the incident in the library the Duke had had the fit of apoplexy; had turned black in the face; and had been regarded as in danger of death. In the library he still looked blackish, 'and his blood seemed to be settled in his cheeks'.

Matthew Brailsford gave similar evidence to Twibell's. He could not say that the Duke had been perfect in mind and memory on 29 August, seeing that he had been seized with apoplexy on the previous day. Interrogated, he added that he had, on 28 August, been credibly informed by the

family and by the physician, Dr. Heathcote, of the apoplexy. He had not himself seen the Duke till the evening, when he saw that he had two black spots in his cheeks, and that his hand was much swollen and disordered. He considered that the Duke had been much disordered by the stroke, which had rendered him speechless and as a dying man at the time; and that he was incapable of undertaking an act which required as much judgement and consideration as the making of a will.

The most important evidence was given by Mr. Walter, the lawyer. He deposed that some time in the summer of 1707 he had been informed by the Duke of Newcastle at his house in Lincoln's Inn Fields that he proposed to make his will the next time that he (Peter Walter) was in the country. On 28 August he went to Welbeck, and soon after his arrival was sent for by the Duke. Next morning, Friday, 29th, the Duke sent for the deponent at 1.0 o'clock, in the library, and said he was ready to give instructions for the drawing up of his will. Walter then took down the Duke's directions from his own mouth, after which he went to his own chamber and drew up the will accordingly. Next morning, Saturday, 30 August, at 11 o'clock the Duke sent for him again, and asked him if he had finished making out the will. He then told him to read it over, and said it was in accordance with his wishes. In the evening, at 8 o'clock, he said he was ready to execute the will. He considered long who should be witnesses, as he did not want what he had done to be generally known.

The Duchess successfully delayed further proceedings for the proving of the will in the Prerogative Court, and in the meantime an action was begun in the Court of Chancery.[1] There were other documents besides the will

[1] See *English Reports*, *House of Lords*, vol. i (Brown's reports), pp. 1433-6; and *résumé* of the history of the previous dispute among Welbeck MSS.; Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 33,137, f. 250.

of Duke John to be taken into consideration. There was the will of Duke Henry, and also the subsequent deed of 17 January, 1693, whereby Duke John and the Duchess settled the estate left by Duke Henry, subject to his remaining debts, on trustees, namely Henry Herbert and William Jessopp, and their heirs, in trust for Duke John and his heirs. It was on this deed and upon the testimony of William Jessopp, one of the trustees, that the Pelhams chiefly relied in their contention that Duke John had been perfectly entitled to leave the Cavendish properties by will. In the Michaelmas term of 1711 Lord Pelham and his brother exhibited a bill in the Court of Chancery against the Duchess and also against Lady Henrietta, to enforce the production of the will and of the deeds settling the Cavendish estates; to remove all impediments to the trying the validity of the will; and to obtain an account of the testator's personal estates in order to apply them to the settlement of his debts, legacies and other charges, in order to prevent these all falling entirely upon his real estate. To this bill the Duchess put in a plea, answer, and demurrer, pleading that the will of Duke Henry and his subsequent instructions had settled all the Cavendish estates upon her for life and upon descendants of her body on condition that they took the name of Cavendish. This plea was argued in the Court of Chancery on 10 March, 1711, before the Lord Keeper, Harcourt, and two other judges, and it was overruled. The Duchess thereupon put forward another answer regarding the all-important deed of 1693, and this also was deemed insufficient by the Court.

Thereupon the Court, losing patience, made a definite order on 9 December, 1712, that the Duchess should either set forth the terms of the conveyance *verbatim* or produce an attested copy of it signed by her. The indefatigable Duchess still insisted that she ought not to be expected to reveal the instrument, and now made an entirely new

allegation—that she had been forced to agree to the arrangement of 1693 by fraud or surprise. The Court adjudged this answer 'not agreeable to the order'; and in order to bring the recalcitrant lady to her senses and to force the production of the deed, upon motion granted a sequestration against the Duchess.

It was at this point that the Earl of Oxford found it impossible any longer to support the Duchess. She was stubbornly determined to ignore the order of the Court, and to appeal from it to the House of Lords.[1] The Lord Treasurer did his utmost to persuade her to desist from her purpose, but quite in vain. He then wrote to say that he could not appear in the House when the cause was heard; and when the hearing took place, neither he nor any lord with whom he had any influence appeared. As the Duchess persisted in defying the authority of the Court of Chancery, a sequestration of all her property was ordered. The Auditor tried to bring her to see reason, pointing out the 'confusions and inconveniences', which must ensue if she would not yield up the deed, to which she replied, 'this I will never do', and seemed to intimate she would withstand the sequestrators coming into the house. The Auditor very patiently pointed out the objections to that policy also, and was successful to this extent, that the Duchess left her house in Lincoln's Inn Fields next day. But she did not produce the deed, which the sequestrators did not succeed in finding. It had either been lost or destroyed. When the Duchess was later on prevailed upon to put in her answer in the Court of Chancery, and a formal examination of the whole matter

[1] There is in the *Newcastle Papers*, vol. ccclxxx, Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 30,064, f. 3, a copy of the letter which Lord Pelham wrote on 1 May, 1713, to his friends asking them to attend the hearing of the case in the House of Lords. 'If your Lordship will be so kind as to come up it will be looked upon by everybody as a signal mark of your Lordship's justice which so manifestly appears on all occasions, and by me in particular as the highest obligation. . . .'

was undertaken in December, it was insinuated that Edward Harley himself had conveyed the deed out of the Duchess's residence, and carried it away with him to Wimpole. This, happily, he was able to disprove; but he was certainly justified in considering it a very fortunate thing that the Lord Treasurer had steadfastly refused to countenance the Duchess's later proceedings, since if he had, 'he could never have been cleared in the opinion of the world from being concerned with the Duchess in the destruction' of the deed.[1]

The sequestration was exceedingly inconvenient to Lord Harley and Lady Henrietta, for a good deal of the sequestrated property was claimed by Lady Henrietta to be hers. They therefore on 5 September, 1713, presented a humble petition to the Court, setting forth the disadvantages which they suffered in consequence of the order. They pointed out that Lady Henrietta had all along put in a separate defence of her rights as against the Pelhams, and ought, therefore, not to suffer for the delinquencies of the Duchess, to which she had in no way been a party. Not only the real and personal estates of the Duchess herself had been sequestrated, but also the houses at Lincoln's Inn Fields,[2] Welbeck Abbey, Nottingham Castle, and other parts of the Cavendish estates. In these houses there existed deeds and evidences which indisputably belonged to Lady Henrietta. Fear of what use the Pelhams might make of the sequestration was the main reason for this petition. It was alleged that under colour of the sequestration some tenants had been prevailed upon to begin paying rents to Thomas, now Lord Pelham, his father having died in 1712. Worse still

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. v, pp. 658-9.

[2] See a schedule of the deeds and other writings—some 1200 in number—at Newcastle House in Lincoln's Inn Fields made pursuant to an order of the Court of Chancery on 20 March in the 13th year of Queen Anne in Add. MS. 33,136, ff. 1-56.

was the apprehension that in some way or other the deeds and evidences in the houses which had been sequestrated might fall into the hands of the Pelhams, and the petitioners prayed that every precaution should be taken to prevent this from happening.[1]

Lady Henrietta was in no way involved in the Duchess's efforts to avoid the production of material evidence when ordered to do so by the Court of Chancery; but when the Duchess brought the dispute into the cognizance of the House of Lords on 19 May, 1713, by an appeal from the Order of the Court of Chancery, Lady Henrietta's case was separately put forward. Lady Henrietta stated that in pursuance of the will and settlement of her grandfather she had taken upon herself the name of Cavendish, and that the Pelhams ought not to have any assistance of the Court of Chancery, or any other Court of Law or Equity, to impeach the said will and settlement, under colour of a writing pretended to be the will of John, Duke of Newcastle, whereby the Cavendish estate was divided, and the greater part of it given to the Pelhams, on condition of their taking upon them the name of Holles. This respondent did therefore humbly insist that her mother ought not to produce the deeds, declaring the use of fines and recoveries of the said Cavendish estates, or any other deeds relating to her father's estate which might in any sort be prejudicial to this respondent, who as the grand-daughter of Henry, Duke of Newcastle, and the great-grand-daughter of William, Duke of Newcastle, and being of their name and of their blood, ought to be preferred to the Pelhams, who were not of the family name or blood. They therefore ought not to be assisted by the Court to set aside the will of Duke Henry, which had been fully proved and established, or to compel the respondent's mother to destroy the charge

[1] Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 33,137, f. 250, among *Miscellaneous Papers of the Family of Pelham*, vol. i.

laid upon her, and the great trust reposed in her, to keep the Cavendish estates entire in the blood and family of Cavendish, and to act against her duty, honour, and conscience, 'for that the Court of Equity ought to compel a due Execution of Trusts, and not in any sort to assist the Breach of them'.[1]

The principal argument put forward on the Duchess's behalf before the House of Lords was that, the writing purporting to be the will of Duke John not having been proved to be his will, there was no reason why the production of deeds relating to the estates in dispute should be demanded on the basis of that 'writing', and that if bare suggestions should prevail over positive denials, vexatious suits would be encouraged and many titles brought into great danger.

This argument was vigorously controverted by the Pelhams' counsel. If the Duke of Newcastle's will had not been proved, that was simply because the appellant deliberately prevented it. Till the deed of 1693 was produced no progress could be made, and the respondents were entitled to the assistance of the law to enable them to bring their claim to trial in the Court of Chancery. The order of December, 1712, had therefore been just and consonant with the rules of equity.

The House of Lords upheld the respondents' view, and the Duchess's appeal was accordingly dismissed.[2]

[1] *English Reports*, *House of Lords*, vol. i, p. 1435; *The Case of the Respondent Lady Henrietta Holles Cavendish to be heard in the House of Lords, Tuesday, 19 May, 1713*, among the Countess of Oxford's papers at Welbeck. The sequestration was, in the first week of February, 1714, by order of the Court of Chancery taken off from all of the Cavendish estates, which were not in Duke John's lifetime settled upon the Duchess. Brailsford wrote to Lord Harley to say that the reception of this good news in the village of Kirkby was celebrated with the ringing of bells, and that the tenants showed great satisfaction 'at the thoughts of being Lady Henrietta's tenants from whose known goodness thay expect all that lenity and indulgence that their case may require'. Welbeck MSS., Brailsford to Lord Harley, 13 Feb., 1713/14.

[2] *Lords' Journals*, vol. xix, p. 542.

When the Duchess at last consented to exhibit an answer satisfactory to the Court of Chancery, and she was under examination regarding the deed, which was now not merely withheld but missing (for the sequestrators had been unable to find it), Lady Henrietta was not concerned. The Duchess on the one side, and the Pelhams on the other, as the Earl of Oxford put it, sent summonses 'to everybody they can imagine and think fit to name about the Deeds'; among them the Dean of Wells, Mr. Auditor Harley and several of Lady Henrietta's servants. 'This is a fine farce', observes Oxford, 'and the sooner it is ended the Better.'[1] All these protracted proceedings in Chancery, in the House of Lords, in Doctors' Commons, were occupying a great deal of time and costing a great deal of money. Only the Duchess of Newcastle remained of an intransigent humour. A compromise had been suggested by the Attorney-General as early as August, 1711; now it was December, 1713. Already suggestions for an accommodation had been made. On 1 June, Lord Pelham made an attempt to establish friendly relations with the Duchess. He wrote:

> 'I cannot tell how to excuse the Liberty I take in troubling your Grace in this manner, but the perpetual uneasiness and concern that I am in at the apprehension of my being under your Displeasure makes me venture to take this way of assuring your Grace that no body living can have a more perfect esteem and veneration for your Grace than I have, nor can be more desirous of taking all opportunitys of expressing the utmost respect and regard to your Grace upon all Occasions. and this I am sensible I ought to do upon your account as well in justice to the memory of my Uncle, and whatever Fate may attend me, I will never be wanting in so essential a

[1] Welbeck MSS., first Earl of Oxford to his son Lord Harley, 16 December, 1713.

part of my duty. I dare scarce venture even to mention Lady Henrietta's name. Could I be so happy as to be thought by your Grace worthy of her, I can assure your Grace there is nothing in the world I would not do either to make your Grace easy or for her satisfaction. Your grace might in that case dispose of me and all that belongs to me.'

He earnestly begged her Grace's pardon for the freedom which he had taken but assured her that it proceeded from no other motive but profound respect.[1]

Here assuredly was an admirably simple method of bringing to an end the rivalry between the Cavendish and Pelham claims: let them be amalgamated in an union between Lord Pelham and Lady Henrietta, which would have the additional advantage from the Pelhams' point of view that there would be no Harleys intervening in a matter which would not then concern them. But if the Duchess did not love the Harleys, still less did she love the Pelhams. In any case she could not have arranged a marriage between her daughter and Lord Pelham, even had she wanted to do so. Henrietta had resolved to marry Lord Harley, and less than three months later her marriage took place. This letter, therefore, seemed to the Duchess merely a useless impertinence. She replied with tart brevity that she was 'very much surprised at his Lordship's Assurance in sending such a Letter'.[2]

Meeting with no better response in this quarter, and the marriage between Lord Harley and Lady Henrietta having in the meantime taken place, so that the Harleys could no longer be put on one side, Pelham in the autumn entered into negotiations with them through the mediation of

[1] Copy of letter from Lord Pelham to the Duchess of Newcastle, Add. MS. 30,064, f. 5.

[2] *Ibid.*

Lord Paget, one of the executors of the Duke's will, who must have been placed in a position of extraordinary difficulty by the antagonism between his two colleagues in the trusteeship. We find both Lord Oxford and Lord Pelham, early in October, 1713, expressing their inclinations to peace, and their great satisfaction that the conduct of the negotiation was in the hands of one in whom they could place such entire confidence. Next month a further stage was reached. While 'peremptorily' insisting on his title under the will, Lord Pelham stated that in his desire to end all disputes regarding it, he was willing to treat concerning that part of it which related to the Cavendish estates—the only part which had ever been complained of as a hardship.[1]

In answer to the second of two papers sent by Pelham to Paget for communication to the Lord Treasurer, which were both to the same purport, Lord Oxford assured Lord Pelham and his friends that there was a real disposition on the other side to come to an amicable settlement, and 'to unite the Familly in Friendship which ought to be among such near Relations'. He proceeded to state what he considered ought to stand as the basis for a negotiation. Instead of seeking to secure the whole of the property in dispute each party would be content with that proportion of it which seemed satisfactory, taking into consideration the uncertainty and the expense of the law.[2]

Lord Pelham was not very well satisfied with the terms of this paper, because Lord Oxford took the line in it that even if the will were sustained and the missing deed produced—even then Lady Henrietta had a good claim to the whole of the Cavendish estates. He seems, moreover, to have desired that in the forthcoming negotiations there

[1] Add. MS. 30,064, ff. 16, 17, 19, 21. Duplicates of papers dated 3 and 10 November respectively.

[2] *Ibid.*, ff. 24, 25 (duplicates).

should be a discussion of the rights and wrongs of the question, whereas Oxford's proposal was in effect that legal considerations should be set aside, and considerations of expediency be made the only criterion.[1] Oxford was resolved never to agree that the Pelhams had any title to the Cavendish estates.[2] Real progress was made when Lord Pelham abandoned his idea, and it was agreed to invite Lord Cowper to act as arbitrator and to draw up a scheme for an amicable settlement.[3]

Even with both Pelhams and Harleys showing a desire for peace and for a compromise, based upon a division of the disputed estates, the task of the arbitrator was no easy one. There was the inherent difficulty of making a distribution of a very large number of properties scattered all over the country, which would be acceptable to the contestants, however genuinely desirous they might have become for a settlement out of Court; there was the knowledge that the Duchess was not consenting to any scheme of division at all; there was the fact that the Vane family had an interest in the will, and it was doubtful up to the last whether they would come into the agreement or stand out.[4] During the years which elapsed between the Duke of Newcastle's death and the final settlement, rents had been paid to Lady Henrietta and to the Duchess on parts of the disputed properties which Lord Cowper eventually awarded to Lord Pelham. The latter insisted that he must have compensation for arrears of rent. Again, any settlement agreed upon involved acceptance of the will; and it was therefore possible to argue that he must also have compensation for

[1] Brit. Mus. Add MS. 30,064, ff. 29-30; Add. MS., 33,137, f. 257.

[2] Welbeck MSS., Earl of Oxford to Lord Harley, 18 December, 1713.

[3] Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 33,060, ff. 29, 31, 33, 35.

[4] Welbeck MSS., Edward Harley [the Auditor] to his nephew Lord Harley, 9 Mar., 1715.

the expenses in which he had been involved owing to the title having been disputed. Lastly, there was a question of a residence for him. Lord Pelham tried to get both Bolsover and Welbeck. Naturally Lady Henrietta could not be prevailed upon to surrender Welbeck, which Lord Cowper in the first instance awarded to Lord Pelham. Since he did not ultimately get either Bolsover or Welbeck, Pelham insisted that he must have Nottingham Castle, and, 'seeing the Bare shell of the House can be of little or no value, but rather an expence, the lands thereunto belonging and adjoining'.[1] Even when he did obtain Nottingham Castle, it is evident from the final agreement that this did not satisfy the demand for suitable accommodation fitting the dignity of one who on 26 October, 1714, became Earl of Clare, and on 2 August, 1718, before the Bill, which ratified the agreement had passed into law, Duke of Newcastle.

While these protracted negotiations were in progress, efforts were made to bring about a reconciliation between the Duchess and her daughter, and so to render the settlement complete, as it could not otherwise be. But the Duchess was still full of bitter resentment. She wrote on 28 March, 1715, 'If I know myself, I am determined to

[1] See Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 33,060, f. 30; 33,054, *Newcastle Papers*, 'Personal Affairs,' vol. i, ff. 69-70. The Duke of Newcastle does not seem to have thought so poorly of Nottingham Castle when he came to examine it. It was true the windows were all broken, and new sashes would be required everywhere; but he reported to his wife (2 December, 1718): 'The House is in the Main very noble and pretty convenient. The Apartment below stairs will be very handsome for to live in every day. That above is very magnificent, but out of Repair, but we may shift with it as it is. The State Bed Chamber is well furnished wth velvet Bed & good Tapistry. Our Rooms must all be new fitted up & furnished, but they will be very handsome and convenient; above & below there will be great conveniences for servants & seven spare apartments for Strangers, w^{ch} is more than we expected.' See Add. MS. 33,073, *Newcastle Papers*, vol. ccclxxxix, ff. 3-4.

get my right if justice be not out of England, therefore will try to the last.' She valued her honour, she declared, far above her interest, and would therefore never own her right to be another's; as she must do if she assented to the

> 'pretended agreement by which Harley takes from Pelham my estate as a gift from Pelham, which estate I will defend to the last coat on my back. . . . The proceedings of that crew shall never be mine, nay the more they appear in such shapes, the further off they shall find their design they pretend to take effect. Their treatment of me is every day more and more notorious, visible to all persons that will see and hear as well as I that feels their injust brutishness. Therefore must beg all that will be my friends never to name the Harleys nor their allies, they giving me hourly reason to abhor them.'[1]

In another equally fierce and vigorous letter of 9 April, the undaunted widow refers to the hope of the Harleys and the Pelhams to tire her out; but in this 'they will find their politic abortive'. They expected, she said, 'to be able to torment me, when they both joined, but in so childish a way that makes all reasonable people laugh'.[2] In the following August the Auditor reported that the Duchess was endeavouring, by intimidation of the agent, to prevent the payment of certain rents to the Harleys. In October she made a will by which she disinherited her daughter. By her husband's will she was free to dispose of the manor of Orton, which he left to her. She had no hesitation in declaring that the condition the Duke had made for her daughter's succeeding to the property, that she should merit it by 'her Duty and Obedience to her Mother', had not been fulfilled. But it is clear that despite, her proud boasts that she could not be tired out, the Duchess was by

[1] H.M.C., *Bath MSS.*, vol. i, p. 248. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 248-9.

Henrietta (Cavendish-Holles) Harley, Countess
of Oxford, 1694–1755
from a painting by Sir G. Kneller, 1714

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this time suffering considerably from the strain of her prolonged struggle. A correspondent of Lord Harley, writing on 17 September, reports that he has recently seen her Grace, and that she seemed to him 'extreamly broken, and tho' her spirit will not submit to think so, it is very visible her Troubles have had a very strong Effect upon her'. She has entirely altered her manner of life, sitting up later than she had been accustomed to do, and not rising till noon, eating little, and after a sparse dinner solacing herself with some cordial water with an infusion of snake root in it. 'I cannot think', concludes the writer, 'these are Methods probable either to long Life or Health.'[1]

It seems clear that there were faults on both sides. Dr. Brailsford, who had from the beginning sided with the Harleys, wrote in November, 1714, a very outspoken letter, containing what he himself described as 'very unmannerly' advice to Lord Harley. New efforts towards a reconciliation had been made in the previous month, and they had failed. Brailsford wrote to say that he earnestly desired nothing might be done, either on his Lordship's part or on the part of his agents, to provoke her Grace, or to deter her from putting that confidence in Lord Harley which was necessary for a foundation of peace between them. He then went on to say:

> 'Any conduct that shall set your actions at variance with your sayings will not only render that agreement impossible by exasperating her Grace's passion, but it will also expose you to the indignation of all the World, by fixing upon you the Character of Unsincerity in your solemnest pretences; the disadvantage whereof will nearly affect you in more respects than you can easily imagine through the whole Course of your Life.'[2]

[1] Welbeck MSS., William Levinz to Lord Harley, 17 Sept., 1715.
[2] *Ibid.*, Matthew Brailsford to Lord Harley, 2 Nov., 1714.

We can only guess to what conduct the Dean of Wells was alluding, but very likely it was in connection with the collection of rents, there having been unfortunate clashes between rival agents.

At last, only two months before the Duchess's death, a reconciliation took place. Humfrey Wanley, Lord Harley's librarian, wrote to congratulate him:

> 'I am extremely rejoyced to hear of my Ladies and your Reconciliation to my lady Duchess. I am sure nothing in the world could be more agreeable to, or of more Satisfaction & Comfort to her noble Ladiship than this thing.'[1]

Wanley himself celebrated the glad event in suitable style, by the drinking of a large quantity of punch, for which he obtained leave to use a gallon of Lord Harley's brandy, mixing it with twelve lemons and a quantity of snake-root. Lord Harley approved of the drinking of brandy punch, but considered the inclusion of snake-root ill advised. He thought the brandy would do his librarian good, but was afraid that the snake-root would not prove at all beneficial.[2]

The Duchess died in London in her sixty-fifth year on 24 December, 1716; she was buried at Bolsover on 5 January, 1717. With her death there passed away the last obstacle to the ratification by Act of Parliament of the agreement made as far back as 30 July, 1714, between Lord Harley, Lady Henrietta, Lord Pelham, and Henry Pelham. The petition for the introduction of such a Bill was made by the four parties to that agreement, and also by William and Gilbert Vane. It was heard on 17 Decem-

[1] Welbeck MSS., Humfrey Wanley to Lord Harley, 4 Nov., 1716.

[2] *Ibid.*, Humfrey Wanley to Lord Harley, 8 Nov., 1716, and Lord Harley to Wanley, 11 Nov., 1716.

ber, 1718, and referred to the judges, in accordance with the normal procedure of the House of Lords in such cases. The Bill received its first reading on 22 December, its second reading on the following day, its third reading on 12 January, 1719. After having been approved by the House of Commons, it received the royal assent on 18 February.[1]

The Act begins by reciting the terms of Duke John's will, and refers to the 'several Suits, as well at Law, and in Equity, as in the Spiritual Court', which had arisen soon after the Duke's death, whereby the validity of the will was contested in respect both of the real and of the personal estate of the testator. The Bill then recapitulates the terms of the agreement made in 1714, and the proposals made by the arbitrator, Lord Cowper, to which, with a few subsequent alterations, the parties agreed.

In the first place there was awarded to Lady Henrietta Cavendish Harley and to her heirs:

> 'All the Honours, Baronies, Manors, Castles, Lordships, Manor Houses, Parks, Chases, Capital Messuages, Messuages, Fairs, Tolls, Markets, Farms, Lands, Tenements, Timber, Trees, Woods and Under-Woods . . . Rectories, Advowsons, Tythes, Rents and Hereditaments, as well Lease-hold and Copy-hold as Free-hold'

of which Henry, second Duke of Newcastle, was seised or possessed at the time of his death, subject to such jointures and incumbrances as lay upon them at the time of Duke John's death. Lady Henrietta was also to have all the estate, both real and personal, given to her in the contested will of Duke John, and all the estates purchased by him after 29 August, 1707 (the date of the signing of the aforesaid will). On the other hand, Lord Harley, for and on behalf of his

[1] *Lords' Journals*, vol. xxi, pp. 25, 33, 34, 44, 75.

wife, agreed that all other honours, manors, baronies, etc., etc., of which John, late Duke of Newcastle, died possessed should be enjoyed by Thomas, Lord Pelham, subject to such limitations as were set forth in the Duke's will. In addition, certain burgage houses and lands in Aldborough in Yorkshire and certain manors and lands in Dorset and Wiltshire were to go to Lord Pelham.

Such were the arrangements regarding John, Duke of Newcastle's real estate in the agreement of 1714. It was now further arranged that the £20,000 portion to which Lady Henrietta was entitled should be charged to the late Duke's personal estate, and was not to be a liability on the portion of real property allocated to Lord Pelham. In the next place, Lord Pelham was to have the value of £10,700 of building timber out of the woods at Welbeck for the building of a house at Haughton or elsewhere; and pending the valuation of the timber and its delivery Lord Harley and Lady Henrietta were to pay interest at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum. In addition Lord Harley was to pay Lord Pelham the sum of £2,800,[1] interest on this sum also to be at the rate of 5 per cent. pending full settlement. This latter sum was to be invested in the purchase of lands. Lord Harley and Lady Henrietta were to permit the contested will to be proved in the ecclesiastical Court or the Court of Delegates, and they were to join with Lord Pelham in such proceedings in other Courts or in such other acts as might be deemed necessary to make the agreement effectual.

There followed a recital of further arrangements to which William and Gilbert Vane were consenting parties in addition to the four principals. Whereas on the one

[1] One finds Mr. Auditor Harley writing to his nephew on 13 Aug., 1734: 'Allow me to take notice of the 3000 paid to the Duke of Newcastle by me which was one of the principal means to induce his consent to the Bill.' He asks that this and other sums advanced by him may now be paid to him. Welbeck MSS.

hand Lord Pelham, hereinafter described as Duke of Newcastle (as he had become after the agreement of 1714), was seised and possessed of a newly impaled park called Clumber Park, in the county of Nottingham, which had belonged to John, Duke of Newcastle, wherein several lands of the late Henry, Duke of Newcastle, now held by Lord Harley and Lady Henrietta were situated; and whereas also the latter were possessed of certain estates in the town of Nottingham with which in the time of Duke John the castle and park of Nottingham were usually held, 'to render the same more Commodious and beneficial'; and whereas, in the third place, Thomas Holles, Duke of Newcastle held certain lands intermixed with, or lying near, several manors and lands belonging to Lord Harley and Lady Henrietta, which rendered the latter 'incommodious and inconvenient', the several parties to the agreement had on 26 July, 1718, agreed that any lands held in Clumber Park were to belong to Thomas Holles, Duke of Newcastle, and that the castle and park of Nottingham were also to be his; while Carburton was to be enjoyed in its entirety by Lord Harley and Lady Henrietta, except for any of the lands of that estate which might be impaled within Clumber Park.

It was further provided that whereas Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle, had since her husband's death received 'several Great Sums of Money, Part of his Personal Estate, which she ought to have applied to the Payment of his Debts and Legacies, but she did not'; and that Lord Harley and the Duchess had both received 'great Sums of Money, for the Rents and Profits of the several estates pending the settlement of the suits at law', Lord Harley and his wife should with all convenient speed pay all the debts and legacies of the late Duke John, discharging the Duke of Newcastle from all obligations in this matter. Again, as soon as the costs and charges of the sequestrations had been

taxed and adjusted, Lord Harley was to pay all the costs to which the Duke had been put in the prosecution of the suit of sequestration. In lieu of the £10,700 worth of timber from the Welbeck woods, which by the original agreement were to have been handed over by Lord Harley to the Duke of Newcastle, the latter was willing to accept the amount in money, to be utilised in the repairing of Nottingham Castle, or in building a house there or at Haughton or at some other place in the county of Nottingham.

For the purpose of raising the two sums specified to be paid to the Duke of Newcastle, and to pay the debts and legacies of Duke John, the Lady Henrietta was willing that the whole of her estates should be vested in trustees, who in the enacting part of the Act were nominated—Lord Cheyne, Peter Walter and John Morley. The duties of the trustees were to pay the rents of the Cavendish estates allotted to them, to Lord Harley and Lady Henrietta; to sell or mortgage sufficient property in order to pay in cash the £13,500 due to the Duke of Newcastle; to pay the debts and legacies of the late Duke; to satisfy the present Duke in compensation for rents which had been paid to the Duchess or the Harleys on the properties now allotted to him; and to pay legal expenses, the whole amounting to another £65,800, without counting the debts and legacies.

Another clause in the Act concerned Christopher Vane, an infant, the eldest son of William Vane. Since the death of the late Duke of Newcastle, large quantities of timber had been blown down at Welbeck by tempestuous winds, the whole being valued at £8,000. As by the limitations of the disputed will no tenant for life of the Welbeck estate had power to commit waste, and Christopher Vane was the first person who had any inheritance in those premises, and had in fact commenced a suit in Chancery for the fallen timber, the said Christopher Vane was to have all of it and

the money for which it either had been or might be contracted to be sold.[1]

Finally it was enacted and declared that the surname of Holles was confirmed to Thomas Holles, Duke of Newcastle, and that the aforesaid Duke should hereafter use the name of Holles and not that of Pelham. The same provision was to apply also to Henry Pelham, William Vane, and Gilbert Vane or their heirs, in the event of their coming into possession of the estates of the late Duke of Newcastle.

[1] The demands of William Vane, enhanced by the fortuitous great fall of timber at Welbeck, gave a great deal of trouble in the last stages of the negotiation. Mr. Auditor Harley tells us that 'there are some persons who are endeavouring to make this a handle to confound the agreement. . . .' Welbeck MSS., Edward Harley [the Auditor] to Lord Harley, 18 June, 1716.

Chapter XIV

THE LATER LIFE OF THE SECOND EARL OF OXFORD

The early married life of Edward Harley must have been much troubled and harassed. His father, the Lord Treasurer, during the whole of his last year of office was vexed by the internal divisions within his party, and more particularly within his Cabinet, culminating in the revolt of Bolingbroke, and his own dismissal from office before Queen Anne's death, his impeachment immediately after the accession of the new sovereign, his imprisonment in the Tower, and his physical and moral deterioration after his release. There was also the estrangement between Lady Henrietta and her mother, and the prolonged uncertainty regarding the Cavendish estates. All his life Harley was dogged by financial worries. He was naturally improvident, and, although his marriage brought him a considerable fortune, yet he was never able to put his affairs on a sound financial basis. This no doubt was in large measure the result of the dispute over the Duke of Newcastle's will, and of the terms of the settlement. If during the first six years or so after their marriage the Harleys lived up to the full extent of an income derived from the rental of by far the greater part of the Cavendish estates, and then, in consequence of the award of a proportion of these to the Duke of Newcastle, their income from this source was considerably reduced, and, worse still, large cash payments had to be

made to the Duke, it is clear that without determined retrenchment and good management there was serious trouble in store. The payment of interest on the two sums of £10,700 and £2,800 began in the summer of 1716.[1] Then the capital sums had to be raised by the trustees. In April, 1719, the Auditor was conferring with Mr. Walter in an attempt 'to extricate (Harley's) affairs from the labyrinths that gross folly or grosser knavery have embarrassed'.[2] Lord Harley was looking round for methods of recoupment, and he turned his thoughts to the magnificent woodlands which had been the glory of Welbeck Park for generations. The agent who valued the windfallen timber, allotted by the Act of Parliament to Christopher Vane, valued all the trees, apparently including Mr. Vane's, at approximately £100,000, and was willing to clear the whole Park within ten years of those left by Mr. Vane for £50,000. While unwilling to fell any of the timber near the house, 'or that is an Ornament to it, or that is improving by Growth', Oxford was disposed to sell all that was suitable either for the Navy Board or for private shipbuilders, and considered sending wood that was not fit for the ship-yards to London for use in the building of Cavendish Square.[3]

The agreement with the Pelhams meant for Harley, not only a considerable reduction in the newly acquired Cavendish wealth, but also a loss of political influence. So little interested was he in politics that it seems likely that his equanimity was little disturbed by the thought that Pelham influence might conquer Nottinghamshire (as it did) for the Whig interest. But he received much good counsel and many adjurations on the subject. Mr. William Levinz,

[1] Welbeck MSS., Auditor Harley to Lord Harley, 14 July, 3 Aug., 1716.

[2] *Ibid.*, same to the same, 29 April, 1719.

[3] *Ibid.*, copy of letter written by Lord Harley's secretary to Mr. Knight, 26 March, 1719.

while congratulating him in July, 1714, on the agreement with the Pelhams which had just been concluded, advised him to cultivate the Cavendish interests in Retford,[1] and a few days later urged the necessity of immediate action. There was to be an election of bailiffs in the town, and he feared that, if exertions were not made to prevent it, the position of Lord Steward of the Corporation, vacant since the late Duke's death, would pass outside the family.[2]

At the beginning of September, Mr. Levinz was sorely troubled by the prospects of the parliamentary elections in Nottinghamshire, and especially in the county town. He wished to God, he said, that Lord Harley himself resided in the county. Lord Pelham's agents were confidently boasting of the great sums they had at their disposal, and of how they would bear all before them.[3] On the death of the Duchess of Newcastle in December, 1716, the Harleys immediately took possession of Welbeck and Orton, and they therefore had the residence in the county which Mr. Levinz regarded as so desirable.[4] Nevertheless, things grew a great deal worse instead of better. In 1720 the Duke of Newcastle was turning out all the Tories and substituting Whigs both in the county and in the borough representation—being perhaps not so successful in Mansfield and Retford as he had anticipated, but only too successful elsewhere.[5] Two years later Mr. Levinz writes very solemnly:

'It has been my Fortune to see a good deal of Election Affairs in my Time, but I never yet saw any Thing

[1] Welbeck MSS., William Levinz of Grove to Lord Harley, 21 July 1714.

[2] *Ibid.*, same to the same, 26 July 1714.

[3] *Ibid.*, same to the same, 11 September, 1714.

[4] *Ibid.*, Edward Harley to the same, 24 December, 1716.

[5] *Ibid.*, William Levinz to the same, 21 September, 1720.

come near this, where the methods of Menace & Promises have been so extravagant, & the Corruption so open and avowed.'[1]

The Duke of Newcastle, the prince of all eighteenth-century borough-mongers, brought to the task of parliamentary electioneering not only all the political influence which attached to the great Holles properties, but also an immense amount of industry, determination, and enthusiasm. Harley would have been powerless against such an indefatigable adversary, even had he possessed the will seriously to contend against him. He had neither the resources nor the political ambition, and the Whig tide was running so strongly in the reign of George I that it would have needed real devotion to such a task to try to counteract it anywhere.

On the death of his father in May, 1724, the new Earl of Oxford entered the House of Lords. The occasion was celebrated by some pompous adulatory verses:

> Great Peer, wh^{m} all the Arts and Nature kind,
> To grace wth every ornament have joyn'd,
> In social life if we thy actions mind,
> The Husband, Father, and the Friend we find,
> Or if thou Senat's grave debates attend'st,
> Thou Britain's Rights and England's Church defend'st.
> Thou self-sufficient, skilled in Virtue's Core,
> Still tread'st the path when Honour goes before.[2]

But the new Earl made no more mark in the Upper House than he had made in the Lower. Despite the lack of public services to the State, he was in the following year made a Freeman of the city of Edinburgh.[3] Partly, however, because he was rather indolent, more because his inclinations

[1] Welbeck MSS., William Levinz to Lord Harley, 26 March, 1722.

[2] *Ibid.*, William Dowdeswell of Kingham to Lord Oxford, 13 Jan., 1724.

[3] *Ibid.*, Archibald Macaulay to the same, 4 June, 1725.

and ambition were of quite another nature, he sought neither distinction in the senate nor rewards outside it. The rest of the second Earl of Oxford's history, therefore, is the record of his private life.

His first child was Margaret, born on 11 February, 1715, on her mother's twenty-first birthday.[1] From the time of her birth onwards all her grandfather's letters have reference to his 'sweet Peggy'. He is delighted to hear of her growing health and strength; he laments over the loss of her pets. When her mother writes to him without mentioning Peggy,[2] he takes instant notice of the omission, and at once receives another letter from Henrietta with the intelligence that Peggy 'is well, and has cut two Teeth as easy as can be expected; has no Feaver; yet I think it proper to keep her up in her Nursery which is airy though warm, it being to the south'.[3] A month or so later the child has a rash, which is at first thought to be measles, but does not prove to be so; she has not cut any more teeth yet, and is backward of her feet and also of her tongue. She has, however, a very careful nurse, and no danger of rickets is apprehended.[4] When she was a little over three years old, it was recorded of her: 'Miss Peggy is in perfect health and wantonness, and promises as fair as any lady of her years to be an admirable coquette.'[5] Dr. Stratford wrote six months later: 'Little as she is, she has my heart more than ever any mistress had.'[6] In the spring of 1725 she took the smallpox, but 'in a very favourable manner, so that she was in no way

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. vii, p. 211.

[2] Welbeck MSS., the 1st Earl of Oxford to Lord Harley, 19 Feb., 1714/15, 24 March, 1715, 20 Sept., 1722.

[3] *Ibid.*, Lady Henrietta Cavendish Harley to the 1st Earl of Oxford, 28 December, 1715.

[4] *Ibid.*, to the same, 6 February, 1715/16.

[5] *Portland MSS.*, vol. vii, p. 237. Dr. Stratford, 1 May, 1718.

[6] *Ibid.*, 21 Nov., 1718.

Lady Margaret Cavendish Holles Harley,
later Duchess of Portland, 1715-85
by J. M. Rysbrack, 1723

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disfigured by it'.[1] Dr. Stratford in congratulating the father on her recovery described this as the greatest blessing which Heaven could have bestowed upon him save one, namely the birth of a son, of which there were at the time great hopes.[2]

The son indeed was born on 18 October, 1725, and great were the rejoicings and numerous the congratulations. But the rejoicings were soon changed to mourning, for Henry Cavendish, as he was named, lived only four days. William Brome, who, as he put it, had by his Lordship's condescension been permitted to share in the happiness at the too short-lived blessing, 'changed his Festival Dress into sable', and presented himself among the afflicted.[3] The ill fortune which had followed the owners of Welbeck in the two previous generations persisted—there was no male heir; all the parents' hopes had to be centred in a daughter. The Earl of Oxford, like the Duke of Newcastle before him, left only one. Prior, a frequent visitor to both Wimpole and Welbeck, immortalized Margaret Cavendish Harley in the well-known lines addressed to her when she was a child:

> My noble, lovely, little Peggy
> Let this, my first Epistle, beg ye,
> At dawn of morn and close of even,
> To lift your heart and hands to Heaven.
> In double Duty say your prayer,
> Our Father first,—then Notre Père:
> And, dearest child, along the day,
> In everything you do or say,
> Obey and please my lord and lady,
> So God shall love, and angels aid ye.
> If to these precepts you attend
> No second letter need I send,
> And so I rest your constant friend.[4]

[1] Welbeck MSS., William Brome to the Earl of Oxford, 9 April, 1725; *Works of Swift*, vol. xvii, p. 279.

[2] *Portland MSS.*, vol. vii, p. 395.

[3] Welbeck MSS., 29 October, 1725.

[4] *Dialogues of the Dead, etc.* (Cambridge, 1907), p. 131.

On 11 July, 1734, Margaret, when she was in her twentieth year, was married to William Bentinck, second Duke of Portland. In a letter to Swift, written on 8 August, 1734, the Earl of Oxford expressed his very great satisfaction at this alliance. He wrote:

> 'The whole affair was conducted with as much care and consideration as we were capable of; when we looked over and weighed the many offers that had been proposed to us, and what sort of creatures they were composed of, this person we have now chosen had the fairest and most unexceptionable character, and as his composition is the most unlike the generality of the young gentlemen of this age, which you will think was no small ingredient towards our approbation of him.'

He was sure that when Swift met the Duke he would be pleased with him.

> 'As he is free from the prevailing qualification of the present set of young people of quality, such as gaming, sharping, pilfering, lying, etc., etc., so on the contrary, he is endowed with qualifications they are strangers to, such as justice, honour, excellent temper both in mind and body, affability, living well with his own family: and the manner in which he proposed himself was what became a gentleman and a man of honour.'[1]

A year later the Earl told Swift that the marriage had 'in every point answered our expectations and wishes';[2] and three years later, with added knowledge of his son-in-law, he went further. He wrote:

> 'The Duke of Portland so far answers our expectations that indeed he exceeds them; for he makes the best hus-

[1] *Works of Swift*, vol. xviii, pp. 199-200.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 298; 11 June, 1735.

band, the best father, and the best son; these qualities are, I assure you, very rare in this age.'[1]

While Oxford's encomium was based upon a very low estimate of the youth of his day, it is obvious that it was a good deal more than formal, and that his satisfaction with the match was due to genuine appreciation of the Duke of Portland's character, as well as of his rank and position. Friends hastened to congratulate Oxford upon the excellence of his choice. Swift, making strict enquiries concerning the Duke, lest the report given him was due to 'Partiality and good Nature', found it confirmed in every particular.[2] Dr. Conyers Middleton was gratified by the news of the disposal of Lady Margaret to one of the first subjects in the kingdom,

> 'with whom, as fame assures, & your Lordship's prudence & paternal care persuades me, she has the prospect of finding a share of happiness above the usual lot of that high rank in which she now shines'.[3]

One complimentary epistle to the Earl took the form of verse:

> Marriage, the coxcomb's jest, has fed too long
> The slanderous novel, the licentious song;
> Our age, in notions sunk of mutual love
> This pair shall wake, where precepts could not move,
> And future mothers moralise their youth,
> With Portland's virtue, and with Harley's truth.[4]

If Oxford had not the cares of a large family to occupy his thoughts, there was distraction enough in the affairs of certain family connections, which must have given him a great deal of trouble from time to time. His sister Elizabeth

[1] *Works of Swift*, vol. xix, p. 35; 7 April, 1737.

[2] Welbeck MSS., Swift to Lord Oxford, 21 October, 1735.

[3] Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 32,457, *Corr. of Dr. C. Middleton, 1718-1751*, f. 105, Middleton to Lord Oxford, July, 1734.

[4] J. Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century* (6 vols., 1812), vol. iv, pp. 520-2.

had married Peregrine, Marquess of Carmarthen, afterwards third Duke of Leeds,[1] on 16 December, 1712. On the death of the latter, in 1731, Oxford became guardian, trustee, and only acting executor for Thomas, the fourth Duke, who was still under age, and for some time he had to look after Kiveton and the other estates of the new Duke. Among the Earl's papers are many relating to this business —to the late Duke's affairs, to servants, and to other domestic matters at Kiveton, to collieries, corn-lands, river navigation projects, and many other questions of property. The young Duke was abroad for over a year, in 1733 and 1734, and wrote to his uncle accounts of his travels in France and Italy. On the Duke's coming of age Oxford wrote to say that, though his power as a guardian had come to an end, 'yet that of a relation and friend can never cease, and if your Grace is at any time inclined to ask my advice you shall always have it with the greatest sincerity, though I shall never obtrude it upon you'.[2] And subsequently Leeds did consult his uncle regarding election business in constituencies in which he possessed family influence.[3]

Infinitely more troublesome were the affairs of the Vane family. As they do not directly concern the history of Welbeck there would be no point in endeavouring to explain the complicated entanglement of that family's vicissitudes;

[1] Elizabeth died, a fortnight after the birth of her son, on 20 November, 1713.

[2] The following letter from his brother-in-law to Oxford is self-explanatory: Welbeck MSS., Peregrine, Marquess of Carmarthen to Lord Oxford, 28 Sept., 1728. 'The concern I am under at learning of my last night's behaviour oblidges me to give your Lordship the trouble to intreat your Pardon, without which I never can nor shall be easy. Believe me, my Dear Lord (when my selfe) no person Breathing has a more sincere Respect for you. . . .'

[3] Welbeck MSS., papers relating to the will of Peregrine, third Duke of Leeds; letters from Thomas Smith of Kiveton (March 1731-March 1732); letters of Thomas, 4th Duke of Leeds, from Christ Church, Oxford, and from Calais, Paris, Angers, etc., etc.

but from the extent of the correspondence in the Welbeck papers, it is clear that business connected with these potential inheritors of the Cavendish estates under the terms of the Duke of Newcastle's will must have been a serious vexation. Gilbert Vane, the elder of the two sons of Christopher Vane, mentioned with his younger brother William in the will of John, Duke of Newcastle, succeeded to the Barnard barony in 1723, on his father's death. He had nine children—six boys, Henry, Morgan, Thomas, Gilbert, Randyll and Charles, the first born in 1709, the last in 1717; and three girls—Anne (who became notorious as 'Vanella', the mistress first of Lord Hervey and then of Frederick, Prince of Wales), Elizabeth and Jane. Lord Barnard was apparently half-witted and incapable of managing his own affairs. At the end of August, 1728, Lord Oxford and Lord Gower were invited to act as trustees and as guardians to the children. Oxford, saying that there was no one with whom he would rather be associated than Lord Gower, accepted these responsibilities. On 8 September there was a meeting regarding Lord Barnard's affairs at which Oxford, Gower, the eldest son Morgan, and the family lawyers were present. The lawyers explained the deplorable situation of the family, attributing it in large measure to one, Captain John Cole, who had been in the confidence of Lord Barnard, and who had used that position to secure annuities for himself. Indeed it appeared that Lord Barnard was as clay in his hands. It was agreed that the first essential, if the family's prospects were to improve, was to get rid of Captain Cole. Who was to take his place as general factotum? The name of Patrick Guthrie, who had been tutor to Lord Barnard when he had been abroad, was suggested and approved.[1]

[1] Welbeck MSS., papers relating to the affairs of Gilbert Vane, Lord Barnard; Morgan Vane to Lord Oxford, 30 and 31 August, 1728; Captain John Cole to the same, 7 September, 1728.

From the time when he took up his duties Mr. Patrick Guthrie poured out the most shrill and dolorous complaints to Oxford, who more than once apparently desired to vacate a difficult position—for we find Guthrie in 1729 saying that he cannot continue to look after Lord Barnard's person and expenses unless the Earl of Oxford continues his guardianship, and Oxford suggesting a year later that someone else should take his place.[1] Guthrie found the children an intolerable burden, and certainly, if his accounts of them are to be believed, they must have been a handful. He complains,

> 'While there is any one of those mad children in this house I have the strongest reasons to apprehend some irretrievable disorder every moment. I shun their company as much as I can, but they watch me at the door as I come in of a morning, and they have something to ask which cannot be granted. Then the sweet, civil, well-bred terms are Rogue, Dog, Scoundrel, Pick-pocket. My answer is you talk liker Cook wenches than young Women of quality.'

He is at a loss how to describe the house. It is worse than Bedlam; it is 'Bedlam, Drury Lane, Billingsgate, Mother Needhams all at once'. The two worst of the children were Tommy and Betty; they were 'already undone'; the first had not a single good quality, the latter only one—that she seemed to be in love with Lord Oxford.[2] Though he asked the family every morning what they wanted for their meals, when the meals appeared they would not have what was provided, but demanded something else, 'odd out of the way things'. When tea was brought, they wanted coffee; when coffee came, they must have chocolate.[3]

[1] Welbeck MSS., Lord Oxford to Morgan Vane, 28 May, 1730.
[2] *Ibid.*, Patrick Guthrie to Lord Oxford, 29 June, 1729.
[3] *Ibid.*, same to the same, n.d.

The two young ladies went about in the family coach, paying 'unreasonable and too frequent visits' simply because they liked to ride in a chariot with a coronet. Mr. Guthrie complained bitterly of their unreasonable conduct: he had refused to allow them to keep the horses standing in the rain for fifteen hours.[1] Elizabeth and Jane thereupon promptly wrote to Lord Oxford of the unreasonableness of Mr. Guthrie in refusing to allow them to use the coach, when they were prepared to pay for the horses.[2] Guthrie was able to report that a visit of the young ladies to Lord Oxford did them good, and that when they returned they were quite civil to him and to the servants.[3] But the good behaviour resulting from such visits was apparently transient. Privately Guthrie did not express approval of Lord Oxford's conduct as guardian. He declared that he left too much to the lawyers—'knavish underlings'; that he did not send money for the maintenance of the household; and he once threatened to bring Lord Barnard to Wimpole and leave him on the doorstep. If, he wrote, Lord Oxford 'does not like his company he has but to write two lines ordering him a quarter's subsistence out of his own money'.[4] Probably Oxford would not have cared for Barnard's company; in a letter to the Earl, Guthrie speaks of spending a quarter of an hour with Lord Barnard as being 'as great an act of charity as feeding the hungry, cloathing the naked, or visiting the sick'.[5]

Thomas Vane was forever writing lugubrious begging letters to Oxford. When he does not get a reply to them, he threatens to make a disturbance in the family unless money is sent immediately. He is in great want; has not a farthing

[1] Welbeck MSS., Patrick Guthrie to Lord Oxford, 29 June, 1729.
[2] *Ibid.*, Hon. Elizabeth Vane to Lord Oxford, 17 July, 1729.
[3] *Ibid.*, Patrick Guthrie to the same, 2 July, 1729.
[4] *Ibid.*, Guthrie to W. Thomas, 18 Dec., 1729.
[5] *Ibid.*, Guthrie to Lord Oxford, 25 July, 1730.

to subsist on—has not had a shilling in his purse for the last six weeks apart from what he has succeeded in borrowing; he is glad to have even bread and cheese for his dinner; he is ill—his pains are more severe than anyone can imagine; he is incurring heavy expenses for surgeon, physician, apothecary; he has the smallpox and must have £60 to pay more medical expenses; he complains bitterly of his elder brother, who is well off, while he has nothing; he is so destitute that he feels death is preferable to life.[1]

Morgan seems to have got on a good deal better; but Randyll, being in the navy, needs pocket-money, so that he may appear to be a nobleman's son;[2] Gilbert is afraid to appear in the streets because of his creditors; Charles goes to Lisbon and decides to become a merchant, regretting his past, assuring Oxford that he desires to return to his Lordship's favour; he has already suffered enough and finds there are more hardships to undergo. Before long he is desirous of the payment of his inheritance, since a merchant without stock is like a ship without sailors to navigate it. The more he sees of a merchant life and business the less encouraging they appear. The last we hear of Mr. Charles Vane is that a wine trader of good reputation has made him a handsome proposition; so possibly, after four years of representations from this member of the family, Oxford was free of his importunities.[3] We find Elizabeth bitterly execrating Mr. Guthrie,[4] and Jane reporting that unless money is sent to her immediately, she 'must be exposed in a manner not proper for our family'—she is, she declares, without the common necessities of life.[5] But on

[1] Welbeck MSS., letters of Thomas Vane to Lord Oxford, March, 1729, to April, 1733 (*passim*).

[2] *Ibid.*, Randyll Vane to the same, 20 June, 1729.

[3] *Ibid.*, Charles Vane to the same, 21 Sept., 1736, to 5 June, 1741.

[4] *Ibid.*, Hon. Elizabeth Vane to the same, 20 Aug., 1729.

[5] *Ibid.*, Hon. Jane Vane, 13 July, 1730.

the whole the situation in Lord Barnard's household improved, and at length on 1 May, 1736, Mr. Guthrie is able to write a very long letter to Lord Oxford and Lord Gower, in which he congratulates them from the bottom of his heart upon the happy estate to which they have brought Lord Barnard's affairs from the very dismal condition they were in when they were so good and humane as to take the family under their care and protection. The debts have been paid in entirety; all the children are provided for and in a good way except for Mr. Thomas—and even he might turn out well if his cousins, the Duke of Newcastle and Mr. Pelham, could find some employment for him in Ireland or the West Indies.[1]

Every great land-owning peer in the eighteenth century, whatever his inclinations and interests, inevitably had to devote a considerable amount of time to the management of his property. He might have the help of lawyers and agents, but they could not possibly free him of all the labour connected with its maintenance; he himself had to be frequently consulted and, having the ultimate responsibility, had to make the decisions. So when a petition was presented that a certain clergyman should become curate of Bolsover, and the Vicar of Sutton said that he had for the last six years been doing the work, and in particular visiting the sick, while the church-wardens embezzled the small revenues, so that he derived scarcely any emolument for his ministrations, and claimed that he was legally entitled to the position of resident minister of Bolsover, which had been left vacant for want of maintenance, the matter had to be settled by Lord Oxford.[2] And when, a search being made for coal on Fullwood Common, it was reported that a seam had been discovered but that the coal was very soft, and it was doubtful whether the roof would

[1] Welbeck MSS., Patrick Guthrie to Lord Oxford, 1 May, 1736.

[2] *Ibid.*, Rev. Stephen Ward to Lord Oxford, 26 Aug., 1725.

hold, Lord Oxford must decide whether the promise of the seam justified the expenditure that would be involved in working it.[1]

Lord Oxford certainly had some sound advice tendered to him as a landowner by Mr. John Morley of Halstead, one of his wife's trustees, and a sort of general manager to the second, as he had been to the first, Earl of Oxford. Morley laid down a number of very sound rules which should be followed when considering the purchase of agricultural land. Farmhouses, barns, outhouses, fences should all be inspected; tenants should be interrogated as to what they have been expected to do in respect of repairs, and what allowances they have been granted. Discovery should be made whether the land consists principally of meadow, pasture, arable or wood; how much timber has been cut or sold in recent years, and how much is at present of full growth, and fit to be sold without detriment to the estate; whether the land in tillage has not been over-ploughed; what are the obligations of the property with regard to the upkeep of roads and bridges, what wind or water mills exist. If any advowsons are attached, not only their location and value should be ascertained, but also in what state of repair are the rectories or vicarages, and the chancels.[2]

[1] Welbeck MSS., William Wenman to Lord Oxford, 15 Nov., 1736.

[2] *Ibid.*, John Morley to Lord Oxford, 'Rules to be observed when making a Purchase.'

Morley, originally a butcher, made a considerable reputation in his own day as a land-agent and jobber, being popularly known as 'Merchant Morley'. Prior in *Down Hall*, a ballad in which the characters are the poet himself and Morley, writes:

> 'Quoth Matthew, I know that from Berwick to Dover,
> You've sold all our premises over and over.'

Morley became a sort of business agent to the Harleys, and in 1713 he arranged the financial details relating to the marriage of Edward Harley, receiving a 2½ per cent. commission on the dowry brought by Henrietta, i.e. £10,000. Swift strongly disapproved of Morley and of his influence upon the second Earl of Oxford. In a letter of 8 August,

Dear Sir

Twitnam, Ap. 11. 1722.

Your obliging present of Oysters had been sooner acknowledg'd, but that they were half eaten up before I came home to partake 'em. This (tho they were the best Oisters in ye world, & came exactly from that very Coast which anciently sent Oysters to ye Romans) this I say I look'd upon as no great injury, nor will you, when I tell you it was my Mother that eat them. We have both remembred you in our Ale, which you know is ye inseperable Companion of Oisters. I send this to Ld Harley's, tho I don't think it easy to know where to hit a Man of ye Quick Motion & Agility he that shoots you must shoot flying: and if you should be at Halsted, you'll think me an ill Marksman. If I had travell'd with you like Prior, I might know at what Inn or ye road, or with what Landlady, or Maid, you might be met with; & direct accordingly. I thank you for that very pretty Ballad, wch I shall lay up among those things that please me, wch are not many now a days.

Letter from Pope to John Morley of Halstead

[OVER

I have spoken to the Bishop for Davis, & will again. I shall ever be desirous to serve you with Priest or Layman; & you have sent me a Bribe of such Fish as might have tempted St. Peter himself. I am very heartily

Dr Sr

Your most faithfull
oblig'd humble Sert

A. Pope.

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In common with most other magnates of his day, Oxford was constantly appealed to for the exercise of his influence on behalf of petitioners for charity, and although the thanks of the recipients of his bounty are often phrased in terms of hyperbole, it is clear that he was very generous in his benefactions. There are many piteous appeals. John Allen of Bolsover, who early supported the Harley cause against the Duchess of Newcastle, has ever since been the victim of the enmity of the Duchess's agent. By reason of his having been arrested on suit of the late Duchess, many creditors have come down upon him 'much to his Detriment'. He cannot satisfy them all, and at the same time pay the whole of his rent: would his Lordship remit some of it?[1] A composer of popular songs and music for the harpsichord and the flute is in debt to the extent of £240; the only way he sees of saving himself and his family from ruin is to appeal to his generous patrons and benefactors.

> 'Knowing your Lordship to have been the Succour of many unfortunate persons and having several times had the honour of being commanded by your Lordship gives one hopes I shall not be the only person excluded from a Share of the bounty that has allways flowed from your Lordships generous Hand, but that I may be one among the rest who shall ever acknowledge myself to have been saved by your Lordships Generosity.'[2]

An old lady of Morpeth humbly begs his Lordship not to be angry with her if she relates her melancholy circum-

1738, he wrote to Alderman Barber: 'I remember a rascally butcher, one Morley, a great land-jobber and Knave, who was his lordship's manager, and has been the principal cause of my lord's wrong conduct.' *Swift's Works*, vol. xix, p. 153. On Morley generally see *D.N.B.*, vol. xxxix, pp. 80-1.

[1] Welbeck MSS., John Allen of Bolsover to Lord Oxford, undated.

[2] *Ibid.*, an undated begging letter to the same.

stances. She has fallen downstairs and broken both her shoulder and her elbow, and she is unable to do anything for herself. She humbly on her bended knee implores Lord Oxford for Christ's sake to enable her to have a maid; and if it please God to remove her, will his Lordship arrange that she has a decent burial?[1]

Such are a few examples of supplications; two instances of thanks will suffice. One grateful recipient writes:

> 'I return my most Humble thanks to God, and to your Lordship for the kind lines I received from you yesterday. I am, my Lord, astonish'd at your Goodness, and would express my Sentiment of it, but that I find that a Joy which is really felt, is really unspeakable.'[2]

Another describes the bounty of Lord Harley, as he then was, as

> 'conferred with such an Augustan Air, that it precipitates me into Ecstasy. All my thoughts are absorb'd by my Gratitude which like a Whirlpool swallows 'em up. . . . Your Beneficience streams spontaneously from the fountain of an elevated Mind, and is the genuine Fruit of unparalel'd goodness. . . . Judge, My Lord, what inexpressible satisfaction it must be to one near Ruin, to be retriev'd from the jaws of Misery by your exalted Magnanimity and Benevolence in which you imitate the Deity, and which I shal always celebrate.'[3]

All those concerns of Lord Oxford which we have so far considered were in the nature either of irritations, distractions, or routine. We may now discuss the interests to which his heart and mind were devoted. He loved the society of men of letters and of learning; he dabbled in

[1] Welbeck MSS., Miss Katherine Milbourne to Lord Oxford, 24 June, 1727.

[2] *Ibid.*, — Aycrigg to Lord Oxford, 31 July, 1731.

[3] *Ibid.*, Martin Carter to Lord Harley, 24 Aug., 1719.

Phillipps MS
1647 9.

My Lord 2 June: 27 1737

I had the Honour of a Letter from Your Lordship dated April. 7th; which I was not prepared to answer until this Time. Your Lordship must needs have known, that the History you mention of the four Last Years of the Queen's Reign was written at Windsor, just upon finishing the Peace, at which time Your Father and the Lord Bolingbroke had a misunderstanding with each other, that was attended with very bad Consequences. When I came to Ireland to take this Deanry, (after the Peace was made) I could not stay here above a Fortnight, being recalled by a hundred Letters to hasten back, and to use my Endeavours in reconciling those Ministers. I left them the History you mention, which I had finished at Windsor to the Time of the Peace. When I returned to England, I found, their Quarrells and Coldness increased. I laboured to reconcile them as much as I was able; & contrived to bring them to my Lord Masham's at St James's. My Lord and Lady Masham left us together, & enjoyed what they could, but could not find any good Consequences. I was to go to Windsor next Day with my Lo Treasurer; & prevented by Business that prevented me: and so I sent them to Windsor, next Day

Letter from Swift to the 2nd Earl of Oxford,
14 June, 1737

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in the same Coach:
which was Saturday; expecting they would come to some
declaration, But I followed them to Windsor, where my
Lord Bolingbroke told me (~~for I followed them~~) that my Scheme
had come to nothing. Things went on at the same Rate, They
grew more estranged every Day: My Lord Treasurer found his
Credit daily declining. In May before the Queen dyed, I had my
last meeting with them at my Lord Mashams. He left us --
together, and therefore I spoke very freely to them both: and
told them, I would retire, for I found all was gone: Lo
Bolingbroke whispered me, I was in the right. Your Father
said, all would do well. ~~He~~ told him that I would go to Oxford
~~next day~~, on Monday; since I found it impossible to be of any
use. I took Coach to Oxford on Monday; went to a Friend in
Berkshire; where I staid till the Queen's death, and then went
to my Station here, where I staid twelve years and never saw
My Lord your father afterwards. They could not agree about
Printing the History of the four last Years: and therefore I
have kept it to this Time, when I Determine to publish it
in London; to the Confusion of all those Rascals who have
accused that Queen and that Ministry of making a bad Peace;
to which that Party entirely owes the Protestant Succession.
I was for almost four years in the greatest Trust and Confidence with
your Father the Lord Treasurer, as well as with my Lord
Bollingbrook, and all others who had part in the Administration

I had all the Letters from the Secretaryes Office During the Treaty of Peace; out of those, and what I Learned from the Ministry, I formed that History which I am now going to publish for the Information of Posterity, and to confound the most impudent Falshoods which have been published since. I wanted no Kind of Materiells. I knew Your Father better than you could at that Time; and I do impartially think him the most Virtuous Minister, and the most able that I ever remember to have read of. If your Lordship hath any particular Circumstances that may falsify what I have said in that History; Such as Letters, or other Memorialls, I can content they should be printed at the End, by way of Appendice. I loved My Lord Your Father better than any other Man in the World, although I had no Obligation to him on the Score of Preferment, having been driven to this wretched Kingdom (to which I was almost a Stranger) by his want of power to keep me in what I ought to call my own Country; though I happened to be dropped here, and was a Year old before I left it. and to my Sorrow did not dye, before I came back to it again. I am extremely glad of the Felicity you have in your Alliances, and desire to present my most humble Respects to My Lady Oxford, and Your Daughter the Dutchess: As to the History, it is onely of Affairs, which I knew very well: and had all the Advantages possible to know, when you

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wéve in some sort but a Lod. One great design of it, is to do Justice to the Ministry at that time, and to refute all the Objections against them, as if they had a design of bringing in Popery and the Pretender; and further, to demonstrate, that the present Settlement of the Succession chiefly owing to the Lord your Father. I can never expect to see England; I am now too old and sickly, added to almost a perpetual Deafness and Giddyness. I live a most domestick Life. I want nothing that is necessary; but I am in a cursed Scelious oppressed miserable country, not made so by Nature, but by the — Slavish hellish principles of an execrable pretended Scelia in it. Farewell my Lord: I have tyred you and my self. I desire again to present my most humble Respects to my Lady — Oxford, and the Dutchess your Daughter. Pray God preserve you long and happy: I shall diligently inquire into your Conduct, from those who will tell me; You have hitherto continued virtuous; let me hear that you persevere to; — your Task will not be long; for I am not in a Condition of Health or Time to trouble this world, and I am heartily weary of it already, and so should be in England which I hear is full as corrupt as this poor enslaved Country. I am with the truest Love and Respect, My Lord

Dublin. Jun. 14th. 1737.

Your most obedient and obliged humble Servant. J. Swift.

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archaeology; he patronised the arts; he made the collecting of manuscripts, of books, and of coins, medals and miniatures the consuming passion of his life. Most of the distinguished writers and antiquaries of the day enjoyed his hospitality. Swift had been a *protégé*, a firm friend, and a political supporter of the first Earl of Oxford. Immediately after the death of the latter, Swift wrote to the new Earl for permission to examine his late father's papers with a view to writing a life of him. This scheme he abandoned in favour of that of completing a history, begun just before the conclusion of the Peace of Utrecht, of the Lord Treasurer's Administration, which, when it was published, bore the title of *The Four Last Years of the Queen*. But Swift's intention, just as much here as in his pamphlet entitled *The Behaviour of the Queen's Last Ministry*, was to vindicate the conduct of that Administration, and of its head. Oxford, however, had serious misgivings about the work. Swift, when on a visit from Ireland to England, shewed the Earl his manuscript. The latter felt, apparently, that it was based upon incomplete evidence, and especially that 'there were some severe things said which might have been very currently talked of, but now will want a proper evidence to support'. He earnestly requested Swift not to publish the history until he (Oxford) had had an opportunity of shewing it to some family friends. The 'severe things said' in *The Four Last Years* are said against the first Earl of Oxford's enemies, not of course against his friends, and the scruples expressed by the son do him credit. Swift, despite Oxford's admonition, persisted in his intention to publish his history. He said he had abundant materials—some of which he suggested printing in an appendix; he was determined to justify the Lord Treasurer against his traducers, and for the information of posterity to refute such impudent falsehoods as that he had made a bad peace and been disloyal to the Protestant Succession. He told the Earl,

'I knew your Father better than you could at that time; and I do impartially think him the most virtuous Minister, and the most able that ever I remember to have read of'. He had loved him, he added, better than any man in the world. Oxford was very sensible of the sincere friendship the Dean had always felt for the Lord Treasurer, even to partiality, but still deplored the publication.[1] Swift, who had become Dean of St. Patrick's in 1713, was not very often in England after the death of Queen Anne, and he saw a good deal more of Oxford when he was Lord Harley than after he had succeeded to the title. He ministered to the collector's avid appetite by sending him medals, but Oxford said he valued a letter from him more than a thousand medals.[2]

Pope was much more often a guest at Wimpole than Swift ever had an opportunity to be. He was given the run of the household, and indeed lived part of the year in it, and he was made free of the great library, though the poet's manners—his facile amours and occasional intemperance, must have been trying at times.[3] Oxford gave frequent financial assistance in the publication of Pope's works, and the poet was grateful—as well he might be—for the numerous benefactions he received; not only for direct patronage, but for the large number of subscribers whom Oxford obtained for him,[4] and for the constant use of the library, which, as he said, he would have envied in the case of any other man, but not in the Earl's, because he made such good use of it himself and allowed so many

[1] See Strong, *Letters at Welbeck*, pp. 90-4; *Works of Swift*, vol. xix, p. 35; H.M.C., *Bath MSS.*, vol. i, p. 250.

[2] *Bath MSS.*, vol. i, pp. 253-4.

[3] See *Pope's Works* (ed. Elwin and Courthope), vol. viii (iii of the *Letters*), pp. 191-320, for the correspondence between Pope and Lord Oxford.

[4] See e.g. *Pope's Works*, vol. viii (iii of the *Letters*), p. 203.

others to do so.[1] When the Earl gave him a present of a drinking cup, Pope wrote in acknowledgment: 'I will write upon your cup. This is the least thing Alex Pope owed to Edward Earl of Oxford'. In it he drank the health of the donor and of his daughter—so copiously that 'it ended in *sal volatile*'.[2] Writing in 1729, he says:

> 'I often think, when you write these short, insignificant letters, how very imperfectly, or rather, with what nothingness—to use a good puritan expression—they show the real great esteem I bear you, and the sense I feel of your lordship's constant favours in all directions.'[3]

No man of letters of the time was more intimately connected with the Harley family than Matthew Prior. He was a diplomat as well as a poet, and so much were the peace preliminaries negotiated at Paris in 1711 the work of Prior that they were known as 'Matt's peace'. He had so much fuller knowledge of the intricate territorial and economic questions involved than any one else that, it is said, the only reason why he was not sent to Utrecht as one of the British plenipotentiaries for the conclusion of the treaty was that the arrogant Lord Strafford refused to have as his colleague one who was neither of noble birth nor the holder of office in Church or State. There can be no doubt that a sincere affection existed between Prior and his host and hostess at Wimpole. Margaret Harley said that Prior 'made himself beloved by every living thing in the house —master, child and servant, human creature or animal'.[4] Prior speaks of Lord Harley as 'amabilis' and of Lady

[1] *Pope's Works*, vol. viii (iii of the *Letters*), p. 256.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 233. [3] *Ibid.*, vol. viii, p. 246.

[4] *Letters and Works of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu* (2 vols., 1893), vol. i, p. cxii.

Henrietta as 'adoranda'—'adorable Lady Henrietta'. He wrote charmingly of the latter, thus:

> Pen, ink, and wax, and paper send
> To the kind Wife, and lovely Friend;
> Smiling bid her freely write
> What her happy thoughts indite,
> Of Virtue, Goodness, Peace and Love,
> Thoughts which Angels may approve.[1]

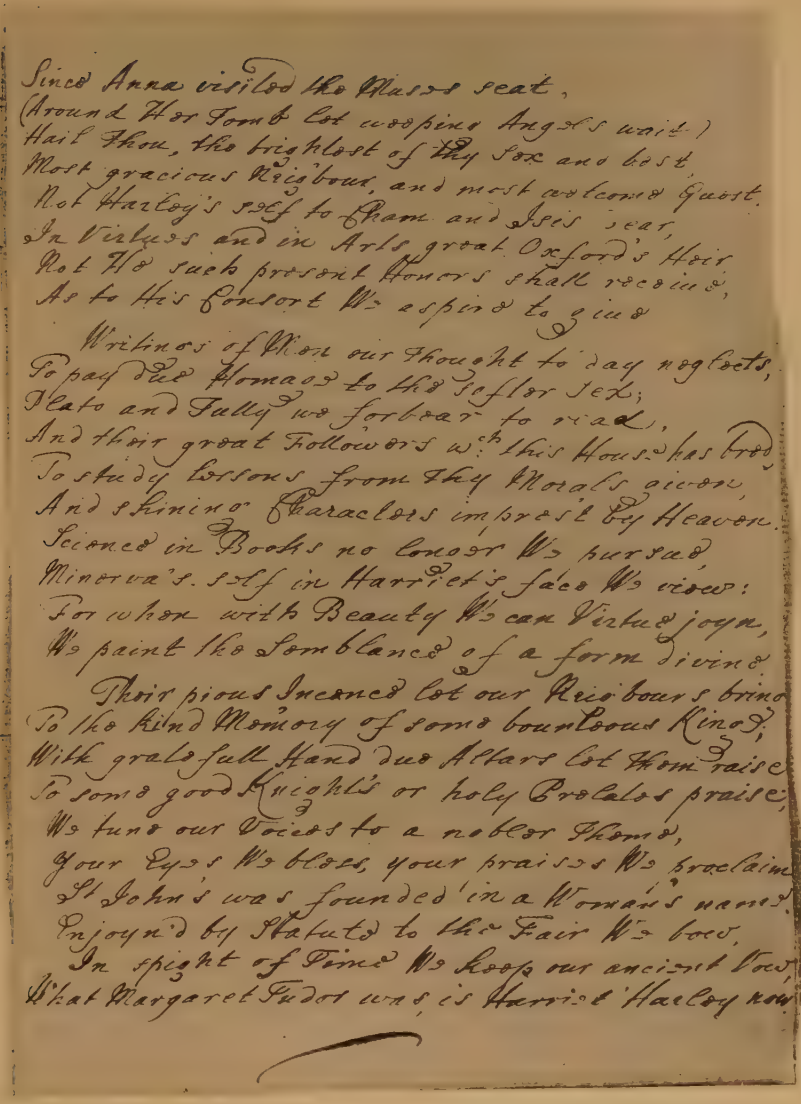
When Lady Henrietta paid a visit to St. John's College, Cambridge, in November, 1719, Prior celebrated the occasion with equal felicity:

> Since Anna visited the Muses' seat
> (Around her tomb let weeping Angels wait),
> Hail thou, the brightest of thy sex and best,
> Most gracious neighbour, and most welcome guest.
>
> Not Harley's self to Cham and Isis dear,
> In virtues and in arts great Oxford's heir,
> Not he such present honors shall receive
> As to his consort we aspire to give.
>
> . . . . .
>
> Science in books no longer we pursue,
> Minerva's self in Harriet's face we view;
> For when with beauty we can virtue joyn,
> We paint the semblance of a form divine.
>
> . . . . .
>
> St. John's was founded in a woman's name,
> Enjoyn'd by statute to the fair we bow.
> In spight of time, we keep our ancient vow,
> What Margaret Tudor was, is Harriet Harley now.[2]

Prior's last hours were spent in the Harley household, for he died at Wimpole on 18 September, 1721. Dr. Stratford in a letter of condolence to Lord Harley on the loss of 'so dear a servant', of one so unequalled in poetic talent both in this or in any other nation, that 'poetry is gone with him' (even so high as this did his eulogy run),

[1] Prior's *Dialogues of the Dead, etc.*, p. 130.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 75. The original manuscript is in the library at Welbeck.



Since Anna visited the Muses seat,
(Around Her Tomb let weeping Angels wait)
Hail Thou, the brightest of thy Sex and best
Most gracious Neighbour, and most welcome Guest.
Not Harley's self to Thame and Isis dear,
In Virtues and in Arts great Oxford's Heir
Not He such personal Honours shall receive,
As to His Consort We aspire to give.

Writings of Men our Thought to day neglects,
To pay due Homage to the softer Sex;
Plato and Tully we forbear to read,
And their great Followers wch this House has bred
To study Lessons from thy Morals give,
And shining Characters imprest by Heaven.
Science in Books no longer We pursue
Minerva's self in Harriet's face We view:
For whom with Beauty We can Virtue joyn,
We paint the Semblance of a Form divine.

Their pious Incense let our Neighbours bring
To the kind Memory of some bountious King;
With grateful Hand due Altars let them raise
To some good Knight's or holy Prelate's praise;
We tune our Voices to a nobler Theme,
Your Eyes We bless, your praises We proclaim.
St John's was founded in a Woman's name:
Enjoyn'd by Statute to this Fair We bow,
In spight of Time We keep our ancient Vow,
What Margaret Tudor was, is Harriet Harley now.

Matthew Prior: Verses spoke . . . in the Library of St. John's College, Cambridge, 9 November, 1719

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spoke of Prior's having enjoyed the 'last satisfaction', in that he died 'with one who had been so noble and true a friend to him as your Lordship has been'.[1] Prior bequeathed several pictures to Lord Harley, who was his executor together with Adrian Drift, one to Lady Henrietta, and a miniature of himself to Lady Margaret.

The Earl of Oxford was the friend and patron of scholars in many fields of learning as well as of poets; his support was constantly solicited for the publication of learned works, which in those days could hardly have appeared at all but for the help of such wealthy benefactors, and he was kept apprised of the progress of such undertakings as he befriended. William Warburton, afterwards Bishop of Gloucester, who was under obligations to him, described Oxford as 'the most distinguished Patron and Friend of Letters that this age can boast of'.[2] Another learned cleric with whom for a number of years Oxford maintained a close correspondence was Conyers Middleton, and the latter kept him constantly informed of University and College politics in Cambridge, of which University the Earl became High Steward in 1728, and more particularly of the enormities of his *bête noire* and arch-enemy, Bentley.[3] These letters are invaluable for the history of the University; they do not of course tell us very much about Lord Oxford, except that, as Middleton retailed Cambridge gossip with such copiousness and particularity, presumably Oxford must have taken a keen interest in it. But here and there we get a glimpse of Wimpole as well as of Cambridge. Middleton speaks of the temptation he is always under of trespassing too much upon the other's goodness, and of

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. vii, p. 304.

[2] Welbeck MSS., W. Warburton to the Earl of Oxford, 13 Oct., 1738; 11 June, 1740.

[3] See the correspondence of Dr. C. Middleton, 1718-1751, in Brit. Mus., Add. MS., 32,457, and in Welbeck MSS.

'growing troublesome by my too frequent visits to a Place, wch of all others that I have yet seen is on all accts the most agreeable to me'.[1] Occasionally there is a discussion of the opera. Lady Oxford is glad to find that Middleton will be in London in time for her to entertain him in her box, and he expresses himself as very unworthy of such an honour. They discuss the question of whether a very realistic representation of Hell, which fills the eyes and throat with smoke, is likely to have a good influence on the town, or is not rather a sign that serious things have become a jest, and the surprising phenomenon of the popularity with people of fashion of an entertainment dealing with vice and infamy such as *The Beggar's Opera*. Middleton was fond of music, and Bentley dubbed him 'fiddling Conyers'. Evidently music, as well as a common interest in works of scholarship and in the domestic affairs of an academic society, was a bond of union between the Cambridge theologian and the host of Wimpole. But the friendship was not lasting. It is probable that Oxford did not approve of those heterodox views which are Middleton's chief title to fame, and which caused him serious trouble in his own University.

While Bentley was Middleton's chief enemy, he also quarrelled with a friend of Bentley, that admirable physician, Dr. Richard Meade. Oxford was the means of reconciling the two. Meade, after studying at Utrecht and Leyden, then the chief centres of medical studies in Europe, became lecturer in anatomy to the Barber Surgeons in London. He attended professionally many of the most notable people in England—including George I, Robert Walpole, Isaac Newton, and Bishop Burnet. He was also medical adviser to Lord Oxford, and he attended Lady Margaret. But Oxford and Dr. Meade consulted on other

[1] Welbeck MSS., Conyers Middleton to the Earl of Oxford, 1 Dec., 1724.

than medical topics—on the Cotton Library, and on appointments in the University of Oxford, of which the Earl became an honorary D.C.L. in June, 1730.[1]

Among the scholars who received practical encouragement from the Harley family, none were under greater obligations than William and Elizabeth Elstob. William Elstob, born at Newcastle-on-Tyne, educated at Eton and at Cambridge, became a Fellow of University College, Oxford, and during the reign of Queen Anne was Rector of two united parishes in the City of London. He published an elaborate defence of the clergy concerning themselves in political matters, and edited an edition of Roger Ascham's letters, but his chief work was done in the field of Old English scholarship. He designed an edition of the Anglo-Saxon laws, but his death in 1715 cut short this enterprise. He was an intimate friend of Humfrey Wanley, the librarian at Wimpole, and he entertained a great admiration for him.[2] Dr. George Hickes, the non-juror, another of the interesting group of scholars who did much for the advancement of Old English studies at this period, recommended Elstob to the first Earl of Oxford as a man 'whose modesty hath made him an obscure person, and ever will make him so, unless some kind patron of good learning will bring him into life';[3] and the Lord Treasurer interested himself in obtaining means for the publication of Elstob's Latin translations of certain Saxon homilies. We find Elstob in November, 1711, acknowledging, in a letter to Edward Harley, the loan of invaluable materials towards his edition of the Saxon laws, 'which I intend by the Grace of God

[1] See the correspondence between Dr. Meade and the Earl of Oxford in Welbeck MSS.

[2] See a series of forty letters from Elstob to Wanley among the Welbeck MSS., covering the period of the reign of Anne, and relating to the progress of his studies.

[3] Brit. Mus., Harleian MS. 7524.

as soon as I can, and with all the improvements I shall be able to give it'.[1]

William Elstob's sister Elizabeth was a more remarkable scholar than her brother, and the first woman who ever interested herself in Old English studies. She was a born linguist, and she succeeded in overcoming the impediments to her education put in her way by those responsible for her upbringing, who believed that one language was quite enough for any young woman. She made her reputation among scholars in 1709 by her translation of Aelfric's homily on the nativity of St. Gregory, which gives an account of the conversion of the English from paganism to Christianity. She embarked upon a complete edition of Aelfric's homilies, but this was never published. In 1714 Dr. Hickes mediated with the Lord Treasurer on her behalf as he had on that of her brother,[2] and in July she obtained through that influence the bounty of the Queen. In 1715 she published her Anglo-Saxon grammar. Elizabeth Elstob was exceedingly poor, and had to support herself in the reign of George I at Evesham by teaching small children to read and write. Here she maintained a very humble and penurious existence, which offered her small opportunities for her favourite studies. At length she was recommended to the notice of Queen Caroline, who gave her £100, with a promise to renew the gift every five years; but the Queen died in 1737, before the expiration of the first quinquennium. Once more reduced to indigence, Elizabeth Elstob was, as we shall see later on, rescued by the generosity of Margaret Harley, who was then Duchess of Portland.[3]

[1] Welbeck MSS., William Elstob to Edward Harley, 21 Nov., 1711.

[2] See *Portland MSS.*, vol. v, pp. 379-80, 445-6. Hickes refers to Mrs. Elstob as 'my Saxon Mistress', and asks why, if France boasts her Scudérys and Daciers, 'should not England encourage and honour her Elstob?'

[3] See J. Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. iv, pp. 112-40.

The second Earl of Oxford's interests naturally brought him into touch with antiquaries such as John Anstis, the elder, who became Garter King of Arms in 1714, and with Zachary Grey, Vicar of St. Peter's and St. Giles', Cambridge. The latter was often at Wimpole, and he received many tokens of friendship and appreciation from Lord Oxford. Humfrey Wanley was a constant connecting link with all the principal antiquaries in England, and the formation of the great collection which was Edward Harley's life work, obviously called for such expert assistance. Moreover, Oxford was himself interested in matters genealogical and heraldic, as his memoranda on the personal histories of the nobility and gentry and on other bibliographical questions testify.[1] Sometimes, also, he consulted his friends in the Garter Office on his own affairs—as for example on the arms to which Lady Margaret was entitled after her marriage.[2]

The Harleys gave their patronage to music and art as well as to literature. The compilation of a great collection of ecclesiastical music from the Reformation onwards by Dr. Thomas Tudway, Professor of Music at Cambridge, owed its publication to the first Earl of Oxford, to whom the work was dedicated; but Tudway was also in touch with Lord Harley at Wimpole, for in 1722 he describes himself as 'Master of Ye Music to his Lordship's Chappel'.[3] Many of the best known artists of the day were under obligations to the second Earl of Oxford. James Gibbs, the architect, was employed by him in designing new buildings at Wimpole, and in collecting pictures of the Caracci, Claude Lorraine, and others;[4]

[1] See Brit. Mus., Harleian MS. 7544; Welbeck MSS.

[2] *Portland MSS.*, vol. vi, p. 53, John Anstis to Earl of Oxford, 25 May, 1734.

[3] See in Welbeck MSS., numerous letters from Tudway to Wanley, 1715 to 1720.

[4] *Ibid.*, James Gibbs to Lord Harley, 2 Feb., 1715, and accounts for £194 1s. 0d. on 24 July, 1719, and of £138 7s. 0d. on 17 May, 1721.

George White, the mezzotint engraver, executed many prints for him;[1] John Wootton painted a number of landscapes, about twenty of which are now at Welbeck;[2] while Christian Zincke, who had a great vogue in his day as a painter of portraits in enamel, was often employed.[3] Bernard Lens, the miniature painter, also did a considerable amount for Edward Harley, purchasing prints for him; framing pictures; cleaning, repairing and reframing his miniatures.

No one received more constant encouragement and employment from Lord Oxford than George Vertue, who became a friend and intimate of his patron, so that he often enjoyed the latter's hospitality. On returning to town from one of his visits he sends his thanks for 'many kinds of generous entertainments, which at yr. Lordship's house I enjoyed, an Honour none of my particular profession (ever that I know of) attained to. As it is my earnest wish to continue in yr. good graces, so I pray that no evil genius may ever separate me from them.'[4] Again, nine years later he refers to the Earl's 'generous friendship at all times', and to his 'bountiful entertainments'.[5] Vertue owed a great deal to Oxford's collection, finding there many of the originals from which he made his engravings, and he made much use of the prints which it contained—'the most curious collection and incredible numbers of Prints of all kinds too many for anyone's memory to be charged with'.[6] He bor-

[1] See catalogue and prices in Welbeck MSS., 17 Feb., 1733/34.

[2] Welbeck MSS., e.g., receipt for £82 15s. 6d., 16 May, 1715; list of eleven pictures, painted for Lord Harley, price £214 4s. 0d.; nine pictures painted for Lord Harley in 1716, £200 1s. 0d.; four pictures, n.d., £117 12s. 0d.

[3] *Ibid.*, in 1725.

[4] *Ibid.*, George Vertue to the Earl of Oxford, 29 Sept., 1724.

[5] *Portland MSS.*, vol. vi, p. 49, George Vertue to the Earl of Oxford, 13 Nov., 1733.

[6] Welbeck MSS., same to the same, 21 March, 1731/2.

rows the manuscript of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton's life with its remarkable set of prints showing the history of his own time; when he is commissioned to make an engraving of Lord Bacon for an edition of his works he wants to see any prints which Oxford may have collected of him.[1] The intimacy of Vertue's relationship with his patron is indicated by the fact of his accompanying Oxford on more than one of the peregrinations through the countryside in which the Earl rejoiced, and on which notes were made either by himself or by another member of the party. On two occasions the writer was Vertue. It is he who records the journey through Kent, Sussex, and Hampshire made in September, 1738, and one through Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk made in June and July of the following year.[2]

The earliest of these pilgrimages of which a similar account exists is one which Lord Harley took in Kent, starting from his house in Dover Street on 26 August, 1723. He made his way over Shooter's Hill to Rochester, Chatham, Faversham, and Canterbury, noting that on a heath near Rochester men of Tonbridge and men of Dartford

> 'were warmly engaged at the sport of cricket, which of all the people of England the Kentish folk are most renowned for, and of all the Kentish men the men of Dartford lay claim to the greatest excellence'.[3]

A much more extended tour was taken in the spring of 1725. Rough notes made of this journey by Lord Oxford

[1] Welbeck MSS., same to the same, 10 Jan., 1728, 14 Dec., 1736.

[2] *Portland MSS.*, vol. vi, pp. 68, 70. There are brief jottings in Vertue's own Note Books of a journey he took with Oxford, in August 1728, to Wimpole, Lincoln, Newark, Welbeck, and Doncaster. Returning to Welbeck, he visited Bolsover, Hardwick, and Chatsworth. See *Vertue Note Books*, vol. i, pp. 17-18; vol. ii, p. 31 (Walpole Society, 1932). See also for the tours in 1738 and 1739, *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 19-20.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 76.

himself exist;[1] and there is also a more literary and extensive account of it, based upon those memoranda, apparently written up by his chaplain.[2] The party left Wimpole on 20 April, Mr. John Morley being a member of it, and ten servants were taken, including a cook as well as the groom of the chamber, coachman, grooms and postillions, six coach horses and eleven other horses. At Stilton they sampled the local cheese, but it was not approved: it might be food for the gods, but it was not food for men—'few human stomachs would care to devour it'.[3] Of Lincoln Cathedral it is remarked that, though 'it has been a magnificent pile', it is 'now in a very poor condition, and has all the tokens of entire ruin approaching'.[4] The party entered Nottingham and passed through Sherwood Forest, through Clumber Park with its four hundred head of red deer, and so by the dam of Carburton, which the late Duke of Newcastle had stocked with pike, to Welbeck, where they stayed two nights.[5] They then made their way into Yorkshire, and by way of Doncaster and Pontefract, to York. Oxford noted down some curious facts about Pontefract—the method of running the liquorice trade, and the drinking habits of the Saviles. A visit was made to Castle Howard, on which he also made extensive notes.[6] Half-way between Thirsk and Northallerton the party passed over 'a very bad piece of road which goes by the name of Purgatory'.[7] Oxford was sceptical of the story told of a Yorkshire gentleman, that in spite of the coldness of the climate 'they fed their Cows with Melons and their Hogs with Peaches'; he was inclined

[1] Welbeck MSS., notes of the Earl of Oxford on a tour in Northumberland and in the Northern Counties, 1725.

[2] *Portland MSS.*, vol. vi, pp. 81-147.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 82.

[4] *Ibid.*, vol. vi, p. 84.

[5] Welbeck MSS., Lord Oxford's notes of the tour.

[6] *Ibid.*, vol. vi, pp. 87-8.

[7] *Portland MSS.*, vol. vi, p. 98.

to think that the Yorkshireman's capacity for telling tall stories about his county was commensurate with its size.[1] By way of Durham, Newcastle, Alnwick, and Berwick, the travellers entered Scotland. The presence of a cuckoo and two crows among the Lammermuirs prompted the reflection that those were stupid creatures indeed that had wings and yet stayed there.[2] For a short while the party made their way along the sands, and even rode into the sea purely out of curiosity, and to see 'the waves break under the belly of the horses'. But they had ridden in the water for only about ten minutes, when Lord Oxford's mount reared up violently several times, 'so that his Lordship was forced to quit him, and throw himself into the sea'. He did the latter, but was fortunately rescued by his servant. The danger must have been negligible, as the water did not come above his middle: yet the pious author of the narrative is much moved by this 'very great mercy and deliverance, for which I pray God make us all thankful whenever we reflect upon it'.[3]

The most interesting feature of the account of the Scottish part of the journey—through Linlithgow, Stirling, and Dunblane to Dupplin House and Perth—is the vivid description of the solemnity of a Presbyterian Communion service.[4] On the way back through Northumberland a visit was made to the Earl of Oxford's properties; to the valley of the Cocket, where is that 'high, rocky mountain' belonging to him called Simonside; and so to Morpeth, where his Lordship transacted business with his tenants and neighbouring gentlemen; to Ogle, where it is noted that 'this Castle has been a very considerable building, but has now nothing to signify it but its ruins'.[5] The party then

[1] Welbeck MSS., Lord Oxford's notes of the tour.
[2] *Portland MSS.*, p. 111. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 112.
[4] *Ibid.*, vol. vi, pp. 113-25.
[5] *Ibid.*, vol. vi, pp. 126-8.

made their way westward, through Hexham to Carlisle over an exceedingly bad road never attempted by coaches and where the judges came but once a year. They passed over Stainmore Common to Barnard Castle, Fountains Abbey, Knaresborough, Leeds, and Sheffield.[1] The journey ended at Welbeck; over 800 miles had been traversed without accident, which 'must be esteemed a singular mercy of Almighty God', and by order of the Earl 'a particular collect of humble acknowledgments for this great blessing' was offered by the chaplain in the chapel.[2] Over £130 were spent during the eight or nine weeks passed on the road, and Oxford kept an account of the petty cash paid out—the tips given to vergers at Lincoln and York, to the girl who conducted the party to the Bishop's palace at Lincoln, to the lad who shewed them the Galilee in Durham Cathedral, to the gardeners and guides at Castle Howard, to his godson and to the servants at Dupplin, to poor people on the road, the £2 for the waterman at Newcastle, the money spent on books and plaids at Edinburgh, on bridles at Barnard Castle, on razors, knives, and scissors at Sheffield.[3]

Similar notes in Lord Oxford's hand exist of a long journey through Suffolk, Norfolk, and Cambridgeshire, in which there are exact particulars of the route followed and the distance covered each day, but which is chiefly remarkable for the author's condemnation of Sir Robert Walpole's house at Houghton, 'neither magnificent nor beautiful, there is a very great expense without either judgment or taste'.[4] Another of these narratives of travel is one by Lord Oxford himself relating to a tour through the eastern counties taken in the winter of 1737-8. Diss was discovered to be the worst town and to contain the worst

[1] *Portland MSS.*, pp. 130-145. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 146-7.
[3] Welbeck MSS., notes by Lord Oxford of the tour.
[4] *Portland MSS.*, vol. vi, p. 160.

inn the writer had ever seen in Britain. The only tolerable food to be had was a piece of pork; the beef steaks were as black as a shoe and as tough, and the accommodation so bad that the party were more tired when they got up than when they went to bed.[1] But an inn as bad or worse was found at Alresford on a journey in Hampshire, Wiltshire, Berkshire, and Oxfordshire in October 1738. When the Earl went to bed, he found the room full of smoke, two fires having been lit in order to make sure of his being warm. The windows being opened to clear the smoke let in a storm of wind and rain. The fires had to be extinguished, and then Oxford tried the bed,

> 'such a bed, there were great lumps much bigger than my fist and as hard, the bed clothes as heavy as lead, the bolster and pillows filled with new feathers that they stank like the devil'.[2]

The accounts of Lord Oxford's journeys make agreeable reading; they are often lively and amusing, and they reveal him in an attractive light—keenly observant of the countryside and most of all of its churches, its castles and great houses, anxious to see all that is to be seen, and particularly interested in antiquities. Both amid his books, his manuscripts and his pictures, in the society of the men of letters, the scholars, and the artists, whom he made his friends, and journeying along the English highway through its towns and villages, Edward Harley was a happy man. He had troubles, which will be discussed in the next chapter, and his latter days were sad; but upon that part of his career which we have so far been considering we can dwell with pleasure. Little has been written about the

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. vi, p. 170.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 172. It is noted during this tour that Salisbury is 'an exceedingly nasty town, and the cathedral in a very dirty condition'.

second Earl of Oxford, and that little usually by people who have been interested in him solely as a very minor adjunct to the study of the greater men of letters who came in contact with him, and their references have usually been disparaging, and sometimes contemptuous. It seems neither generous nor sensible to belittle one who did not pretend to be a great man, who was not ambitious to achieve political success, and who knew his own limitations too well to aspire to literary fame, though he loved literature—and to do so simply because he was not the intellectual equal of the men whom he befriended. The conventional attitude to him arises from the false conception of patronage as it existed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, to which allusion has already been made.[1] The means which the nineteenth century found for the remuneration of art, literature, and scholarship did not exist in Edward Harley's day. Without such disinterested benevolence as his there would have been no remuneration at all. Because even creative minds cannot produce unless they possess the means of livelihood, Edward Harley was a benefactor not only of the many poets, scholars and painters whom he helped by his wealth and influence, but also of the posterity which enjoys the works of genius and of erudition, which by the midwifery of the patron he helped to bring into the world.

[1] See *supra*, pp. 160-1.

Chapter XV

EDWARD HARLEY, SECOND EARL OF OXFORD
THE HARLEIAN LIBRARY

The love of books and the zest of the collector were both born in Edward Harley; he inherited them from his father and his grandfather. The latter had possessed a considerable library of manuscripts and of printed books at Brampton Bryan. But, as we have seen, Brampton Bryan was destroyed after the second siege of the house in the Civil War, and it was the first Earl of Oxford who founded the great Harleian Library. While it contained many printed books, its great strength was in its manuscripts, of which there were many thousands—including the papers of Stowe and of Sir Symonds D'Ewes. There were also some 13,000 charters or deeds, the largest collection of these known to exist anywhere, according to a statement drawn up by Humfrey Wanley in 1715. The collection of state papers, and of the letters of princes, statesmen, and scholars was exceeded in value only by that of Sir Robert Cotton.[1]

The library was enormously extended by the second Earl of Oxford. The first Earl, largely immersed in politics, could give only occasional attention to the expansion of his library; his son, with no such distractions, concentrated his whole mind upon this task, and gave to it his daily care and

[1] See *Portland MSS.*, vol. v, pp. 514-16; statement drawn up by Humfrey Wanley in July, 1715.

all his money. Thus, at the date of his death the library consisted of some 40,000 to 50,000 printed books, of about 350,000 pamphlets, and of those 7,639 volumes of manuscripts and many thousands of rolls, charters, and other documents, which form the present Harleian Collection in the British Museum. 'His printed Books', says Collins of the second Earl of Oxford, 'were the most choice and magnificent that were ever collected in this Kingdom', containing the first printed books of all countries; many were 'printed upon Vellum, and otherwise, in the grandest Manner, and enriched with the most costly Sculptures'.[1] As the introduction to the published catalogue of the Harleian Manuscripts put it, Edward Harley had pursued his father's plan 'with equal Firmness and Perseverance', and 'with incessant Assiduity and at an immense Expense'. The main object had been to establish an English historical library of manuscripts, 'and the rescuing from Oblivion and Destruction such valuable Records of our National Antiquities, as had escaped the Diligence of former Collectors'.[2] In describing the whole collection, William Oldys applied to it the metaphor which Francis Bacon had used of the Bodleian Library—'the Ark of Literature'.[3] Edward Harley's interests extended, as we have seen, beyond literature, and he was a collector not only of books and of manuscripts, but also of portraits, prints, medals, coins, and a great deal else of a highly variegated character.

A good deal has been said in disparagement of the Harleian Collection, and of the part taken by the second Earl of Oxford in bringing it together. Horace Walpole spoke with sardonic contempt of the curios, when they were sold by auction on the Earl's death in 1742. There

[1] Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

[2] *Catalogue of the Harleian Manuscripts* (4 vols., 1808), vol. i, p. 7.

[3] Welbeck MSS., William Oldys to the Earl of Oxford, 26 Dec., 1734.

was a great deal of rubbish, he says, such as 'feather bonnets presented by the Americans to Queen Elizabeth; elks'-horns converted into caudle-cups; true copies of original pictures that never existed; presents to himself from the Royal Society, etc., particularly forty volumes of prints of illustrious English personages; which collection is collected from frontispieces to godly books, bibles and poems; head-pieces and tail-pieces to Waller's works; views of King Charles's sufferings; tops of ballads, particularly earthly crowns for heavenly ones, and streams of glory'.[1] Walpole and other detractors, perhaps irritated by the somewhat fulsome adulation with which Lord Oxford's activities were celebrated in his lifetime, have gone to the other extreme, and created the impression that he was no more than a mediocre *dilettante*, who ran through a vast amount of money in making an indiscriminate assemblage of things valuable and valueless, without taste, knowledge, or judgment. That is a grotesque travesty of the truth.

The hasty critics have not, perhaps, realised that to traduce Oxford is by implication to traduce many of the best scholars, bibliophiles, antiquaries, and artists that England produced in the eighteenth century. No single man, however wide his knowledge, could be sufficiently well informed about everything that Edward Harley chose to collect. It may perhaps be admitted that he was too catholic in his aims—but he did not rely upon his own discernment alone; he frequently consulted the best expert opinion in the country. Moreover, he had in his librarian the extraordinarily erudite Humfrey Wanley.

It is a pity that no biography of Wanley exists, for he was an interesting character, and in many ways a remarkable man. The materials for a life of him in the British

[1] *Letters of Horace Walpole* (ed. Paget and Toynbee), vol. i, p. 191.

Museum and at Welbeck are abundant.[1] He was not often at Welbeck—his work lay at Dover Street and Wimpole—but he is so important a figure in the story of the second Earl of Oxford, that no apology is needed for making some reference to his career, more particularly to that part of it which was dedicated to the Harleian Collection.

Humfrey, who was the son of Nathaniel Wanley, scholar and poet, so that he owed something to heredity, was born at Coventry on 21 March, 1671/2, and apprenticed to a linen-draper. He remained in this employment until 1694; but he spent every moment of his spare time in devouring old books and documents, and in copying various styles of manuscript. It was Wanley's palaeographical skill, thus early acquired, that brought him into notice. William Lloyd, Bishop of Lichfield, secured him entrance as a commoner at St. Edmund Hall, Oxford. But some measure of the credit for this translation must be given to Dr. Thomas Tanner, who indeed claimed the entire credit; for Wanley's 'coming out of the draper's shop and settling in a gown at Oxford was almost entirely owing to me', he writes.[2] While at St. Edmund Hall, Wanley became acquainted with Dr. Charlett, the Master of University College, and he was transferred to that society. Charlett became a valuable benefactor, sincerely attached to the

[1] In addition to the large collection of Wanley's correspondence among the Welbeck MSS., relating to his early life as well as to his association with the Harleys, there are in the British Museum his Diary, 1714-23, in two volumes, *Lansdowne MSS.*, 771-2, and letters in the Harleian, Sloane, Stowe, Egerton, and Lansdowne collections. There are also papers in the Ballard and Tanner MSS. in the Bodleian Library. See also *Original Letters of Eminent Literary Men* (ed. H. Ellis, Camden Soc., 1843); J. Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. i, pp. 84-105; vol. viii, pp. 360-4; *The Genealogist*, New Series, vol. i (1914), pp. 114-17; *The Library*, vol, iii (1902), pp. 24-35, 243-55; vol. x (1911), pp. 166-71.

[2] *Portland MSS.*, vol. vi, p. 27, Tanner to the Earl of Oxford, 21 March, 1729/30.

Humfrey Wanley
after a painting by T. Hill, 1717

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young scholar—he signs his letters 'your very affectionate friend', 'your very loving friend'. But he evidently found Wanley's devouring passion for books a nuisance at times. He writes angrily to him in September, 1695, because he has had the 'confidence' to examine his study and to handle his books in their owner's absence.[1] The young man's first undertaking was the compilation of catalogues of manuscripts at Coventry school and at the Church of St. Mary, Warwick. This was purely temporary work, but in February, 1696, Charlett obtained for his *protégé* the post of Assistant Keeper in the Bodleian at a salary of £12 a year. Wanley hoped to succeed Dr. Hyde as principal Keeper in 1698, but he had not taken a degree, and his claims were not even considered.

But the good work he had done at the Bodleian became known, and Wanley was making the acquaintance of people of influence—among them John Chamberlayne, the compiler of *Angliae Notitia*, and the great Samuel Pepys himself—though Charlett warned him he must not expect to receive such great civility from others, or perhaps indeed from any, as he did from Pepys.[2] In 1699 and 1700 he was employed by Dr. Hickes in searching in various parts of England for Anglo-Saxon manuscripts for the latter's *Thesaurus*. Wanley afterwards complained that he was shabbily treated by Hickes, paid less than was agreed upon, and not given the credit he deserved, since Hickes used all the transcripts and citations he had obtained in London, Oxford, Cambridge, Canterbury,

> 'with an Air of Confidence, just as if he had seen or used the Originals Himself. In like Manner, he trump'd up my Notions, as his own; after he had in the beginning of our acquaintance assured me that he thought the

[1] Welbeck MSS., Charlett to Wanley, 15 Sept., 1695.

[2] *Ibid.*, Charlett to Wanley, 23 April, 1695.

Robbing a Man of his Notions was full as wicked, as Robbing a Man of his Money on the High Way'.[1]

When Worcester College was incorporated, it was suggested that Wanley might be elected to a Fellowship there, but nothing came of this—the lack of a degree would in any case have been a fatal bar; and his hopes of being appointed custodian of the Cotton Library on the death of Dr. Cotton in 1702 were also not realised.[2] In 1709 he did some work for the third Earl of Bath. His letters to his wife, a widow, Mrs. Anna Berenclow, whom he had married in 1705, give some details of his journey to Longleat and of his stay there. The jogging of the coach, which he took as far as Salisbury, made him very sick, and he arrived there tired, cold and giddy, so that he was unable to complete the journey, on horseback, that night. He also tore his black breeches 'fearfully'. His clothes seem to have been in a poor way, for he had to have pins, needles, thread and black worsted sent him from home in order to mend them. Mrs. Wanley subsisted on a poor pittance during his absence, and he himself, before he was paid for his work at Longleat, had not even money to pay for the parcels he asked her to send him. However, he was able to assure his wife that he found 'a great deal of Love and Friendship in this Family'; everybody, high and low, was very kind to him.[3]

[1] Welbeck MSS., a note by Wanley made in 1703. Cf. a letter from Charlett, *ibid.*, 15 Sept., 1700, when he started his work for Hickes, advising him 'to deal Exactly and Punctually with Dr. Hickes, so as to gain credit, not only for Painful Searches, Judicious Examinations and correct Transcripts, but also for Dexterity in Dispatch and Expedition thro' Difficultys. This gives Life and Pleasure to the greatest undertaking, encourages Benefactors and creates Patrons, who are always in haste, Impatient of Delays, quickly tired and easily out of Love.' He is recommended to wear his short University wig when calling on Bishops or grave men.

[2] *Ibid.*, Charlett to Wanley, 31 Dec., 1702.

[3] *Ibid.*, Wanley to Mrs. Wanley, 1, 6, 15, 23 Aug., 12 Sept., 1709.

A new permanent employment with better prospects came to Wanley in December, 1700, when he was appointed Assistant Secretary to the newly founded Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, at a salary of £40 'thankfully accepted'. His friend Chamberlayne, at this time secretary to Queen Anne's Bounty, had been upbraiding him for the poor use he was making of his talents. Already at Oxford he had started those habits of life by which he undermined his health—fasting two or three days together, and drinking whole nights together, and reading for so long at a stretch that he seriously strained his eyesight. Moreover, said Chamberlayne, he was wasting talents for which he was accountable to God and his country more than to himself, by living in obscurity, whereas he was worthy to stand before princes. Chamberlayne adjured him, 'in the name of God, come to London, trust in his Providence'; since he would never want for a meal from Chamberlayne or a bed from Dr. Hickes.[1]

Once Wanley was established in London, a bitter quarrel arose between him and Chamberlayne, for whom, as he said, 'I had so great a Respect and Love, that I would willingly have shed my Blood, or hazarded my Life'.[2] Chamberlayne disapproved of some of the friends that Wanley made—perhaps was jealous that he made any friends at all not of his patron's introduction, and accused him of insolence and ingratitude. Wanley retorted with equal warmth and maintained that he had put up with affronts and abuses. There is no need to follow the long interchange of letters in which each accused the other of ill treatment, and did so with much verve and asperity. Ultimately the breach was healed, and the chief interest of

[1] Welbeck MSS., John Chamberlayne to Wanley, 30 March, 10 May, 13 July, 1699.

[2] *Ibid.*, memorandum of Wanley with reference to a letter from Chamberlayne of 21 Aug., 1701.

the altercation is that Wanley, who had been accused by his friend of too great modesty and self-effacement, proved, when he took Chamberlayne's advice and came to London, too self-sufficient and too pushing for the latter's liking. On 5 March, 1702, he was advanced to the secretaryship of the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge at a salary of £70, and this post he retained until the summer of 1708.

Wanley said some bitter things about both Hickes and Chamberlayne, but they were both valuable benefactors to him. Even before the dispute with the latter was entirely composed, Chamberlayne was describing Wanley as

> 'a Person of such Extraordinary Endowments and Qualifications, especially in his knowledge of Saxon MSS. and other Ancient Books, that it is no Compliment to him to say that I know not his Equall either in England or any other part of Europe'.[1]

On 28 April, 1701, Hickes introduced Wanley to Robert Harley, claiming for him 'the best skill in ancient hands and manuscripts of any man, not only of this . . . but of any former age'.[2] Three years later we find Wanley writing to Chamberlayne: 'If ever I did you any Service, or if ever you think me Capable and Willing to do you any, I beg you to take the first opportunity you can of naming me to Mr. Secretary Harley, and of saying all the good you can of me with a safe Conscience.'[3] Robert Harley owed to Wanley his purchase of the D'Ewes manuscripts, for it was from him that he first heard that there was a possibility of their being for sale.

In 1708 Wanley was employed by Harley to catalogue his manuscripts, and was then appointed his Library

[1] Welbeck MSS., letter of Chamberlayne, recipient not named, 22 July, 1701.

[2] *Portland MSS.*, vol. iv, p. 16.

[3] Welbeck MSS., Wanley to Chamberlayne, 16 July, 1704.

Keeper. From that time till the date of his death he was 'agreeably employed',[1] in the service of the two Harleys. The younger had been entrusted by his father with the purchasing of books and papers for the collection, even while he was still an undergraduate; and latterly the statesman, as he became more and more immersed in public affairs, left the management of the library to his son. In the size and the value of the library Wanley took the keenest pride. Very typical of him is a letter which he wrote to the Earl of Denbigh in November, 1713, in which, after reminding him that he had made a catalogue of the Earl's old books some twenty years ago, he went on to say that, having had the custody of the Lord Treasurer's library for some time, he had often had Lord Denbigh's books in his mind. He observed that he not only studied how to preserve what was already got, but to augment the great collection as far as he was able. He knew there was a great friendship between the Lord Treasurer and his 'illustrious Lordship'; and as there was still room for new accessions in the former's library and he understood that it was not the intention of Lord Denbigh to establish any library of antiquities, he thought,

> 'it would be a wondrous thing and a truly noble Action, if your Lordship should throw those old Things into this Library where they will always be preserved to your Lordship's own Honour and Glory and the Public Use'.

What he had written, he added, was altogether without the knowledge of the Lord Treasurer, or of any other mortal.[2] The acquisitive zeal which is revealed in this engaging epistle was placed at the service of the Harleian Collection for a space of eighteen years.

An extraordinary acquaintance with the contents of

[1] Cf. Welbeck MSS., Charlett to Wanley, 14 Jan., 1705: 'I am very much pleased to heare . . . how agreeably you are employed by Mr. Secretary Harley, in digesting the Library of Sir Simon D'Ews.'

[2] *Ibid.*, Wanley to the Earl of Denbigh, 28 Nov., 1713.

other libraries and a keen desire to get possession of them if possible were valuable assets; still more valuable was the extent and variety of Wanley's erudition—his remarkable bibliographical, palaeographical, and antiquarian knowledge.[1] He was now a recognised authority, and he held an assured position. On the other hand, his ambition to become Historiographer Royal in succession to Rymer, who died in 1713, was not gratified. At first when he began working for Lord Harley he had no settled abode—being sometimes employed in London, sometimes at Wimpole, sometimes in Cambridge, and Mrs. Wanley was greatly distressed by her enforced separation from her husband. We find him in March, 1715, assuring her that he misses her company as much as she can miss his, sorry that she is melancholy, adjuring her to be as merry as she can contrive to be.[2] He told his master that his wife was ill of the vapours as the result of her melancholy; she was so blind with constant crying that she could neither read nor write, and her mind was 'totally oppressed'.[3] He himself did not like such frequent removals, and evidently would have liked to be able to summon up courage to complain, but, as he wrote,

> 'I had much rather be with his Lordship than with any other; but yet I am not so thorough apprised of his Mind, as to find him resolved to retain any one in my station, for Perpetuity.'[4]

However, retained in perpetuity he was, and both he and Mrs. Wanley found in Lord Harley and his wife very

[1] Wanley was a member of the small society which developed into the Society of Antiquaries, and a few memoranda of his on its meetings in the period, Dec., 1707, to Feb., 1708, are to be found in Brit. Mus., Harleian MS. 7055. See Ellis's *Original Letters of Eminent Literary Men*, pp. 100-2.

[2] Welbeck MSS., Wanley to Mrs. Wanley, 13 March, 1714/15.

[3] *Ibid.*, Wanley to Lord Harley, 18 Nov., 4 Dec., 1716.

[4] *Ibid.*, Wanley to Mrs. Wanley, 12 April, 1716.

kind and considerate friends,[1] whose friendship was symbolised by the former's gift of a silver tobacco pouch for Wanley, and a silver tea-kettle for Mrs. Wanley, which the latter seems to have treasured above all her other earthly goods.[2]

Harley found in his librarian an exceedingly loyal and devoted servant, who never gave him trouble except on account of his health. It is obvious that Wanley was an utter book-worm, who never took any exercise, and frequently paid the penalty, so that there were times when work was impossible. Thus in March, 1715, he records that he is seized with the stone-colic, so that nothing can be done for the remainder of the week;[3] in November, 1716, he has an undiagnosed complaint, as sharp as his smallpox had been, and as weakening as his pleurisy. He loses six days in consequence.[4] He recognised that health was the greatest of earthly blessings except for that of a contented mind. The latter indeed he possessed, for in doing Lord Harley's business, 'I am', he says, 'therein heartily Contented, Easy and Merry.' But, though he recovered from the undefined complaint which had been as bad as smallpox and pleurisy combined, he enumerated other ailments from which he suffered—ague, fever, gravel, colic, gout, rheumatism, sore throat, tooth-ache.[5] He also evidently continued, as he had at Oxford, to drink, perhaps not to excess, but more than was good for anyone who lived so sedentary a life. Thus, Lord Harley advises him to take

[1] Welbeck MSS., Wanley to Mrs. Wanley; Lady Henrietta, remembering herself very kindly to Mrs. Wanley, desires to know how she makes her peas-pudding, since those made by the cook at Wimpole are not to be compared with them. She also asks for Mrs. Wanley's receipt for making New College pudding, which found the utmost favour—25 March, 1715/16.

[2] *Ibid.*, Wanley to Mrs. Wanley, 6 Dec., 1719.

[3] Wanley's Diary, Brit. Mus., Lansdowne MS. 771, f. 4.

[4] Welbeck MSS., Wanley to Lord Harley, 4 Nov., 1716.

[5] *Ibid.*, same to the same, 20 Nov., 1716.

more exercise and to spend more time in the open air;[1] and when he confesses to be in 'great disorder' as the result of drinking some bad wine, hopes that this will be a warning to him not to meddle with inferior liquors, and earnestly desires him to take care of himself, since his health is of great value to his employer; he must remember that he is on the wrong side of forty and cannot expect to struggle with indispositions as he had previously been able to do. He hopes that Wanley will take this advice in good part 'as it proceeds from a true and sincere concern for you'.[2]

One of Wanley's principal tasks was that of making a catalogue of the Harley Library, which was in itself a very big undertaking.[3] Over this he took an infinity of trouble. Finding one day to his 'great grief' a couple of blunders in the catalogue, he notes that these

> 'have given me the lord knows how much Trouble since in altering and amending. . . . Error (as Spencer describes it) hath a very, very long train. Certainly I am now grown as fearful of a Mistake as a Dog is of a whip.'[4]

Thomas Hearne did not approve of Wanley's methods as a cataloguer. He speaks of his having completed six volumes in folio of the catalogue of the Harley Library, and adds: 'He takes such a method (with no true judgment, as I am told) that 'tis probable he will never live to finish it.'[5]

[1] Welbeck MSS., Lord Harley to Wanley, 11 Nov., 1716.

[2] *Ibid.*, same to the same, 24 Sept., 1724.

[3] See Brit. Mus., Lansdowne MS. 816, Wanley's catalogue (7,040 articles) of the printed books of the Earl of Oxford, completed 14 June, 1717; also Lansdowne MS. 815, 'Essay towards a classed catalogue of the Harleian MSS. by H. Wanley.'

[4] Welbeck MSS., Wanley to Lord Harley, 25 Oct., 1716.

[5] *Reliquiae Hearnianae: The Remains of Thomas Hearne* (ed. P. Bliss, 3 vols., 1869), vol. ii, pp. 138, 251. Contrast Prof. Nichol Smith, *Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. xv (1929), p. 81: 'Humfrey Wanley remains the greatest of all our cataloguers.'

But then Thomas Hearne disliked Wanley, and was bitterly prejudiced against him.

More important, perhaps, was the immense amount of trouble which Wanley took in securing acquisitions. He was extremely keen on the hunt, and if it be true that Lord Oxford sometimes made bad bargains—as every collector on a large scale inevitably will—with the aid of Wanley he certainly made a great many good ones, for the librarian took pleasure in driving a hard bargain and in pitting his wits against those of a would-be vendor. Thus, when anticipating a meeting in London with Dr. Tudway, the Professor of Music at Cambridge, from whom he is instructed to secure some music for Lord Harley, he observes that 'he is the craftiest old Fox that I ever dealt with'—'the Doctor plays close and cunning, but I do not fear the Encounter'.[1] When 'divers Gentlemen' lie in ambush, in eager hope of obtaining what Wanley has his eye on, he being 'resolved to disappoint them', lounges about all day, grabs his man, treats him in the Genoa Arms (his favourite hostelry) and triumphantly secures a 'glorious Parcel'.[2] Mr. Warburton, stating that there is 'a Person of Honour' who is desirous of purchasing his manuscripts, though he would rather sell them to his Lordship, Wanley takes the 'Person of Honour' to be a mere sham, and sends no answer at all, compelling Warburton, whom he believes to be greedy and fickle, to send or come to him. When they do meet, Warburton takes Wanley to a tavern, intending to 'muddle him' before they start negotiations for the sale of the manuscripts; but the contrary happens—it is Warburton who is muddled, indeed is so muddled, as Wanley boasts, 'by our late frolic (which by the way was all his own) that he does not gain the advance of a single shilling'. John Wright sends a number of manuscripts to Lord

[1] Welbeck MSS., Wanley to Lord Harley, 24 Jan., 1715/16.

[2] *Ibid.*, Wanley to Lord Harley, 26 May, 1716.

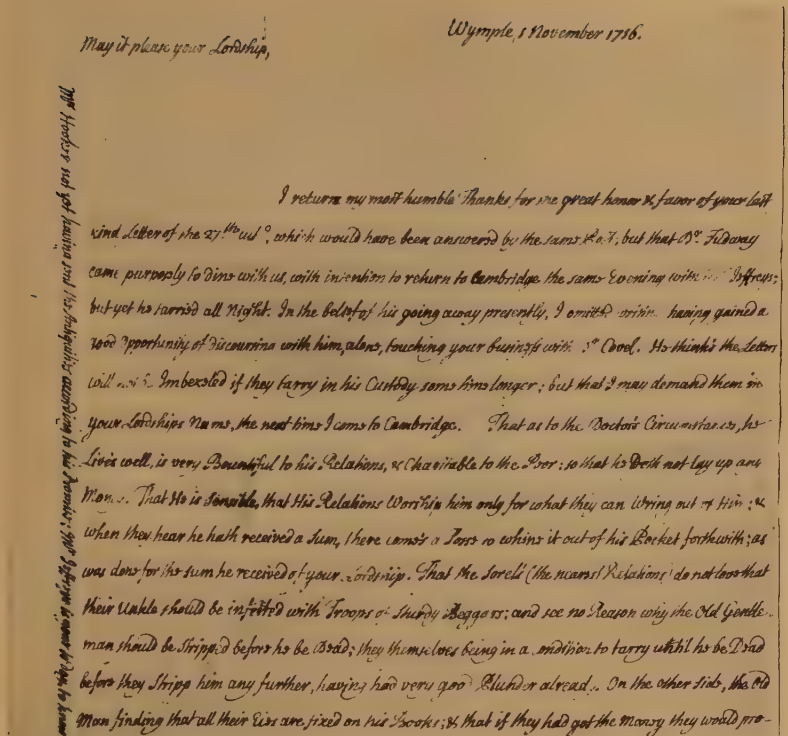
Harley and asks £97. 3s. 6d. for them. Wanley goes through the list, making a contemptuous comment upon each item. The Josephus is incomplete: and only a translation at that; the Orosius is commonplace: so, if Lord Harley will give Mr. Wright £62. 11s. 6d. the latter will have good reason to be thankful.[1] When Lord Harley is about to visit Nathaniel Noel, the bookseller, with a view to selling some books he no longer wants, Wanley draws up a number of arguments for him to use. Thus: the volumes belong to a noble family, and its names and arms are in them; several of the folios are worth several pounds apiece. If Noel bids unreasonably low, he should be told that the eyes of the whole family are on him, and that they may regard him as unfit to be dealt with hereafter; his interest has been promoted by Lord Harley, who helped him to secure Lord Somers's books. Should he still remain surly and stubborn, he must be reminded that it was by Lord Harley that he was originally brought into repute, that he continues to be one of his best customers, and has been the means of obtaining extraordinary books for him. Lord Harley should state that the volumes are worth at least £1,000, and be ready to accept £800.[2] Wanley notes, on hearing of the death of Lord Sunderland, that he believes

> 'by reason of his decease some benefit may accrue to this Library, even in case his Relations will part with none of his books. I mean by his raising the price of books no higher now; so that, in all probability, this commodity may fall in the market.'[3]

[1] See Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. viii, p. 363.

[2] Welbeck MSS., Wanley Miscellanea.

[3] Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. viii, pp. 363-4. See also Brit. Mus., *Lansdowne MSS.*, 677, a little 12mo volume—'Notes of Things proper for this Library in the hands of Particular Persons,' in which Wanley jotted down particulars of books, etc., in the hands of such persons as Charlett, the Elstobs, Sir Hans Sloane, Anstis, Strype, etc., which he wanted to acquire for the Harleian Collection. There



May it please your Lordship,

Wymple, 1 November 1716.

I returne my most humble Thanks for the great honor & favor of your last kind Letter of the 27th ult°, which would have been answered by the same Post, but that Mr Fildway came purposly to Dine with us, with intention to return to Cambridge the same Evening with Mr Jeffreys: but yet he tarried all Night. In the Belief of his going away presently, I omitted writing, having gained a good Opportunity of Discourring with him alone, touching your Business with Mr Covel. He thinks the Letters will not be Imbezzled if they tarry in his Custody some time longer; but that I may demand them in your Lordships Name, the next time I come to Cambridge. That as to the Doctors Circumstances, he Lives well, is very Bountiful to his Relations, & Charitable to the Poor: so that he Doth not lay up any Money. That He is sensible, that His Relations Worrie him only for what they can Wring out of him: & when they hear he hath received a Sum, there comes a Post to whisk it out of his Pocket forthwith; as was done for the Sum he received of your Lordship. That the Sorells (the meanest Relations) do not know that their Uncle should be infested with Troops of Sturdy Beggars; and see no Reason why the Old Gentleman should be Stripped before he be Dead; they themselves being in a Condition to tarry untill he be Dead before they Strip him any further, having had very good Plunder already. On the other side, the Old Man finding that all their Eyes are fixed on his Goods; & that if they had got the Money they would produce, among themselves; he might even have himself: is resolved to keep them while he Lives, & consequently, the Vultures in some sort of Decency, if not Subjection. That as to the remaining part of the Mrs Collection, You may have it for your Money, after the Dr has Whistled & Plaid his part about the price as accustomed; which must be after his College Accompts shall be audited. I have desired him to watch over the Mrs July-

That night we all went to Bed in good time, & I in perfect Health; but the next Morning I was awakened by a strong fit of an Ague & Fever: pain & Swelling of the Glands about the Throat, Head-ach, Sick-ake, pain in my Back & violently in both Thigh-bones. I know not what I had done to deserve this, but I found

Mr Hoadley not yet leaving us, his Indisposition according to his Promise; but I believe it cannot be long before he leave us.

Letter from Wanley to the 2nd Earl of Oxford,
1 November, 1716

[OVER

I must; as the Old Saying is, ein Grin & Abisbit. Mr. Hoakcat comes hither accidentally, & told me I should be soon better: & so. I thank God, through the kind Diligence & Attendance of Mrs Bowyer, & all your other Servants, I am. I am come down into your Library where I write this; yet I am but weak; my head heavy; my Stomach hot: & I must add to hold my pen in my Hand. If I am better this afternoon, I will try to do you some Business: if I shall not be able, I hope your good Lordship will be pleased to excuse me:

Some of your Boxes or Cases will be Open'd. The smallest are brought up hither being the safest Place. I doubt not but the Books will prove very fine: Noel has sent me a List of some of them & are truly Rarities, especially the Durandus of 1459, the Captain of the Band. He says he shall soon have the Catalogue of the Library by the Doctors means, whom Your Lordship saw at his House: That he will refer the Price of the MSS. to me, that I may moderate the Matter between Your Lordship & Him; in Order to which he thinks I must come up to London. I think when he has the MSS. he may send them down hither, & that I may make a Valuation of them here: not that I grutch the going to London, or any where else in your Lordships Service. My Intention was good when I desired Mr Anstis to attend your Lordship; I hope you have seen him elsewhere; especially now that he may procure you the Old Liber at Worcester by his Friendship. Signior Alberto hath written that he hath a fine little Monkey, which he would present to my Lady, if worthy Her Ladyships acceptance. I think it may serve pretty sweet Miss to play with, especially if her health continues as good as it is now: as I hope in God, it will, ever. As to the Box from Cesena, I wrote to Mr John Bagford to call for it. The Bridles are all warranted to be of the best Gilding, & but 2s. 8d. per Bridle: which is very cheap. I wish your Lordship could send down a Bottle of good Ink. I heartily thank God for the Continuance of my Ladies Health & Yours, & also of my Lady & Lord Oxford: to all whom, I could wish my humble duty were presented: as Mr Garwood also desires that his may be acceptable to my Lady & your Self. My Lord, I am almost tired, & must write presently to Noel & Alberto, be pleased therefore to forgive, Your Lordships most faithful & humble servant J Wanley

Noel writes as if he is likely to agree with Bean Bowyer for the remainder of Basil's Books, &c.

Wanley's methods as librarian may best be studied in his own Journal, in which the business of the library is recorded with great detail and formality, his conversations with Lord Harley (as he was during the period in which the Diary was kept) being noted down as if he were minuting the proceedings of a committee. Thus, at a meeting between himself and Lord Harley on 2 March, 1715, he reports that he had last summer written to the Dean of Lichfield desiring him to induce the chapter to part with their *Textus S. Ceaddae*, but he has had no reply. Then follows the minute: 'Order'd that this matter be kept in Remembrance, untill after the meeting of Convocation; and that Mr. Dean Kimberley be then applied unto'. Another day it is 'order'd that the Books and Papers of the late Chief Justice Hale, not given to Lincoln's Inn, be kept in memory'. On one occasion it is noted that the Welsh and Irish manuscripts, together with certain other papers, stones and medals, belonging to Edward Lloyd of Oxford, have been seized by the University for debt, and can now be had for £80; on another occasion,

> 'my Lord Harley having before declared unto me his Intention of Buying the late Mr. John Kemp's collection of Medals, Marbles and other pieces of Antiquity, Greek, Roman and Egyptian, for divers Reasons, was further informed this day, that Mr. Kemp, the present Possessor of them, is grown greatly in debt; so that, in probability, he must part with them in a short time'.[1]

In June, 1718, a certain Mr. Palmer, who was about to make a journey to Persia, expressed his willingness to serve

follow miscellaneous notes regarding the Library made between May, 1721, and January, 1722. There is one particularly amusing entry, describing how Noel 'broods over his new-come things continually, looking into, turning over and counting, & pumping me all day long, in order to advance the price'.

[1] Wanley's Diary, Lansdowne MS. 771, ff. 2, 4 13.

Lord Harley in the East, 'with Relation to old Manuscripts'. Harley was away, but as Wanley told Palmer, he knew his mind so well as to be able to say exactly what his Lordship would wish to have. First, he would like the ancient Greek Bible at Tiflis; secondly, he is willing to buy all Greek manuscripts, ancient or modern, upon paper or parchment, no matter what their subject, provided they be cheap, and he will buy manuscripts of the Greek 'Heathen Writers', even if they be dear, especially the historians and lawyers. He would like copies of St. Paul's epistles, of the other epistles, and of the Apocalypse in Greek. If a Greek book is torn or otherwise in bad condition it should not be rejected. 'Fragments may be welcome to us, who know how to render them useful.' My Lord would have as many Greek charters or old deeds with or without their seals as may be had. By way of Cairo and Alexandria Palmer may meet with manuscripts in Coptic as well as in Greek, and a Samaritan Pentateuch or so. A book with the hieroglyphics of old Egypt would be received as a great rarity. My Lord would be glad to get both a Georgian and an Armenian Bible upon vellum; but if that cannot be had those upon paper must do. Books in the Tartar language would be welcome. Mr. Palmer should insert a paper in each book he purchases, specifying the place at which it was bought and from whom it was bought, and all remarkable traditions, especially about the Tiflis Bible.[1]

The instructions to Mr. Palmer show how omnivorous was Wanley's appetite for additions to the great collection,

[1] Welbeck MSS., Wanley Miscellanea: 'Instructions to Mr. Palmer about to set out to Persia, 22 June, 1718.' Cf. Wanley's advice to John Jackson, a nephew of Samuel Pepys, when he was on the eve of travelling to Spain. This was before Wanley's connection with the Harleys, but there is the same avid intellectual curiosity in the suggestions that Jackson should discern whether the 'Biscainers' have any books written in their ancient language; should try to find coins with barbarous heads and strange titles known as Punic, and, if he

and, if he really was reflecting Lord Harley's mind, how voracious the owner of the collection also was. But Wanley's letters and memoranda reveal not only great avidity, but scholarly discrimination as well, great keenness, energy, and loyalty. Probably there was not a man in England who could have filled the post of librarian with greater ability and distinction. When he died in 1726, and Lord Oxford must needs find a successor, he was told 'you must never expect to find one equal to Wanley'.[1] The one drawback to his services was the interruption due to the chronic ill health from which he suffered, and which culminated in a fatal dropsy, just shortly after he had married a very young woman as a second wife, his first having died of apoplexy in January, 1722.

Wanley had obvious failings. His ill health made him irritable, and he had a very pompous and ceremonious manner, both in speech and in writing, which Pope loved to mimic. Hearne cordially disliked him, spoke of him as a 'young coxcomb' in his Oxford days, and as 'a very great sot' in later life; admitted that he was 'a man of good parts', and might have been 'considerable', but added that he failed to fulfil his early promise, because he did not stick to any one thing, and lacked steadiness and judgment.[2] But with all his failings and oddities, at which it was easy to poke a great deal of fun, there was something that was lovable as well as much that was admirable in Wanley, and it is clear that Prior and Pope both liked him. Dibdin might well say that so long as the fame of his patron remains, so

does find such medals, confer 'with some ingenious Spaniard' and try to pick out an alphabet, by which some light may be shed on 'many a dark Passage in History'; should have copies made of any Roman inscriptions not already published; enquire after any books or inscriptions in the Gothic language; verify the report that a very ancient copy of the Gospels in Arabic has recently been found, etc.

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. vi, p. 16.

[2] *Reliquiae Hearnianae*, pp. 137, 250-1.

long will the rude but honest features of Humfrey Wanley be remembered.[1]

Lord Oxford had other occasional advisers as well as his ever present librarian to assist him. Indeed he was constantly referring questions relating to his collection to the expert judgment of scholars—such as John Anstis, the Garter King of Arms, Thomas Tanner, Bishop of St. Asaph, the compiler of *Notitia Monastica* and *Bibliotheca Britannico-Hibernica*; Francis Wise, the archaeologist, who was Keeper of the Oxford University archives, and after Oxford's death librarian of the Radcliffe. But the most important of helpers after Wanley was William Oldys, who was appointed literary secretary to Lord Oxford in 1728. Oldys, one of the most distinguished antiquaries of the day, was himself a considerable collector of books and manuscripts, including a number of royal letters and state papers, some of which had been in the possession of the great Earl of Clarendon. At the beginning of 1737 Oldys sold his manuscripts and pictures to Oxford, having the satisfaction (as he said) of knowing that in his noble library they would 'be secured from dispersion, and enhanced in their value (some things which appear not to shine alone, receiving lustre by conjunction)'.[2] Thereafter Oldys had free access to the library at Wimpole, using it for the life of the author which he prefixed to his edition of Raleigh's *History of the World*. Oxford's death, two or three years after he entered upon his secretarial duties, threw him on his own resources after he had exhausted the legacy left him by his benefactor. He subsequently acted in collaboration with Samuel Johnson as editor of the *Harleian Miscellany*, to which Johnson supplied the preface, while Oldys selected and

[1] See Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. viii, pp. 360-4.

[2] *Portland MSS.*, vol. vi, pp. 34-5. William Oldys to the Earl of Oxford, 9 Jan., 1730/31.

edited the pamphlets. He also produced a catalogue of the pamphlets, which was issued in parts with the *Miscellany*.[1]

While it is necessary to emphasise the amount of expert assistance which the Earl of Oxford employed in connection with his collection, he himself was no cipher in the work of the library. Wanley's diary records not only the constant consultations between the librarian and his chief, but also the additions for which the Earl himself was responsible. He records from day to day, 'my noble Lord . . . was pleased to send in' this book and that manuscript. Oxford is constantly telling Wanley of his finds—Arabic manuscripts, a Herodotus with notes said to be by Erasmus, a Bracton; giving instructions to Wanley—such as that no opportunity must be lost of securing the most ancient Greek and Latin manuscripts for the library, but no printed books are to be bought unless they are extremely good or extremely rare. When Welbeck comes into his possession, he has all the books and papers in the house transferred to Dover Street, a ton-weight a week (for that is as much as the carter can manage), and has a diligent search made for any cartularies or deeds relating to Welbeck Abbey.[2] Whenever he hears of the possibility of any private collection coming into the market he is at once hot on the scent. His bookseller, Noel, buys up all Dr. Hickes's books, and gives the Earl the first refusal of any he chooses to select. He hears of the death of John Strype, the historian, and instantly orders Wanley to secure his papers, or any of them that may be at all valuable.[3] He has to deal with

[1] See Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. iii, pp. 401-4.

[2] Welbeck MSS., Isaac Hobart to Wanley, nine letters of 1718 relating to this transfer; Lord Harley to Wanley, *ibid.*, 16 June, 1718: —'I am glad the Welbeck library is come safe and that they contain good books as you mention'; Wanley Miscellanea, 'Books from Welbeck Library to be sold, 7 Oct., 1718.'

[3] *Ibid.*, Lord Harley to Wanley, 5 Jan., 1715/16; Lord Harley to Wanley, 27 March, 1720.

many offers of books or curios that are made to him—such as those of William Oldys and of Robert Sanderson, the archivist, who offers to sell him all his gold and other medals for five hundred guineas,[1] and of Dr. John Covel, the Master of Christ's, with whom he entered into a prolonged and at times rather heated bargaining. We find Covel in 1716 offering a collection of Arabic, Persian, and Turkish songs and ditties with their tunes as sung at the Ottoman Court, very rare,[2] and some misunderstanding arising with regard to a collection of Covel's books in 1721. Dr. Covel with nervous passion calls God to witness that it is his only desire that all his books should be in one hand, and that his Honour should have the first refusal of them; but evidently there is difficulty about the terms. 'God forbid', Covel exclaims, 'that you should not have your pennyworth for your penny, but I may justly expect to get my full penny for my pennyworth.'[3] Wanley drafts for Lord Harley a letter in terms of some asperity, saying that Covel may keep four books which he finds it hard to part with, but offering a hundred pounds for the remainder, insisting that 'all written things whatsoever' must be included for that sum, and ending derisively, 'As to the other four Books, which you seem to think too good for me, perhaps I may buy them at a later time, which may do as well as now.'[4]

[1] Welbeck MSS., Robert Sanderson to Wanley, 4 May, 1720.

[2] *Ibid.*, Dr. John Covel to Lord Harley, 21 Feb., 1715/16.

[3] *Ibid.*, same to the same 19 Jan., 1720/21.

[4] There was trouble again in 1722. Covel lent Lord Harley a catalogue containing a list of about half of his rarest and most precious things. Harley very unkindly or carelessly, it must be admitted, kept it a year and a half. Covel, in his eighty-fifth year, felt unsupportable anxiety. Five months later he is still crying pathetically for his catalogue. If it is lost, he is undone. His infirmities increased and the thought that his catalogue was lost tormented him night and day; 'therefore, pity me, my good Lord, oh pity me, by your speedy and gracious answer.' *Portland MSS.*, vol. v, pp. 631-2.

Prior wrote a couplet about the Harleian Library, which runs:

> Fame counting thy books, my dear Harley, shall tell,
> No man had so many, who knew them so well.[1]

No one would be so absurd as to suggest that the second Earl of Oxford read all the thousands of books, or perused all the thousands of manuscripts in his library; but while his joy in them was no doubt in large measure that of the mere collector, the sheer joy of possession, yet it is clear that he was an indefatigable reader, and that he did not allow his treasures to stay on their shelves. Indeed, some of his volumes did a good deal of travelling, from Wimpole to Dover Street, and so on. Thus he sends at one and the same time for two survey books, a Scottish Peerage, a Polydore Vergil, a first edition of Fox's *Book of Martyrs*, a Milton, and a book by Prior.

It is also clear from his instructions to Wanley in such cases that he remembers upon what shelf a book is kept, and in which box a manuscript. Oxford, then, made personal use of his own library. He also rendered it accessible to other people. Wanley kept a note in his journal of the visitors who came to consult books or to inspect coins. Tanner, acknowledging his own indebtedness to the monastic documents in the collection for his own *Notitia Monastica*, adds: 'Your Lordship is most extremely obliging in the kind offer of the sight and use of that vast and valuable treasure which to the benefit of the learned world your Lordship is happily the master of.'[2] There was so much curious and out of the way information stowed away in the Library that enquiries were addressed either to Lord Oxford or to his librarian on all sorts of purely personal or genealogical questions—such, for example,

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. v, p. 611.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. v, p. 27.

as one from the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford on discovering that all the books and papers which had belonged to Randle Holme of Cheshire were now in Lord Oxford's possession. Mr. Holme had for many years drawn pedigrees of the Fellows of Brasenose, proving their relation to Mr. Williamson or Sir John Port, founders of two Fellowships in that College. Would Mr. Wanley transcribe one of these pedigrees?[1]

The Earl of Oxford had, then, the satisfaction of feeling that his collection was not an entirely selfish luxury; that it served a national purpose; was a repository available to the chief scholars and men of letters in England. But if it was not an altogether selfish luxury, it was certainly a most expensive one. Money was constantly pouring out in the purchase of private collections at home, of manuscripts and curios obtained abroad by all manner of agents, in paying the bills of booksellers, bookbinders, artists and engravers. Lord Oxford's papers at Welbeck contain a large number of bills—especially from Nathaniel Noel and from Paul and Isaac Vaillant of Paris, from whom he was constantly making purchases. Large bills were seldom settled outright; so much was paid on account, and such bills were more apt to swell than to diminish.[2] Naturally improvident, Oxford was well pleased to spend a fortune on his collection,

[1] Welbeck MSS., Dr. Thomas Terry to the Earl of Oxford.

[2] See extracts from Nathaniel Noel's memorandum book in the article on the Harleian Library in *The Library* (1910), pp. 166-71. The total amount paid by Lord Oxford to Noel was £10,814. He also disposed of books to the value of £650 to Noel.

By a deed of 13 June, 1721, in consideration of the sum of £2,000 received, Lord Harley granted to Noel and to his wife annuities of £100 a year each for life, chargeable upon the rents of certain Cambridgeshire manors. The latter were sold, and thereupon by a new deed of 5 March, 1739/40, to which Lady Oxford was a party, transferred the liability to certain properties in the Nottinghamshire estates. By such methods of business on her husband's part the Countess's affairs became more and more involved.

but he could not meet such lavish expenditure out of his income, and every year his monetary affairs became more and more involved.

As we have seen, from the very outset of his married life his financial position was never sound. He anticipated an immense fortune when he married Henrietta Cavendish Holles. She brought him a fortune, but it was not on the scale of his expectations, and the agreement with the Duke of Newcastle encumbered it with all manner of restrictions and obligations. There were, too, his father's debts, which were apparently double his assets, while some parts of his estate were unrealizable. Dr. Stratford regarded Lord Harley's financial position in 1714 as very serious, and he wrote:

> 'You must without a moment's delay put a stop to all sort of expense whatever that is not for the support of your family, and you must turn your thoughts every hour to consider where you can spare either in the number of servants or any manner of expense either in your house or your self. You must not think any frugality, be it ever so little, useless.'[1]

Edward Harley did not take such counsels to heart. Instead of practising economy he expended great sums on his collection. Dr. Stratford wrote to him in March, 1720: 'You know I have often wished that you were bound prentice to Morley rather than to Wanley, with all due respect to Mr. Wanley's profession.'[2] Morley was Harley's business agent, and from the point of view of the latter's financial interests it would indeed have been well had he paid a good deal more attention to the management of his estates, and been a great deal less keen upon his Library.

[1] *Portland MSS.*, vol. vii, p. 208, Dr. Stratford to Lord Harley, Nov., 1714.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 271-2, same to the same, 23 March, 1719/20.

His extravagant expenditure on his collection, heedless of whether he could afford it or not, his complete neglect of the common prudence of examining his accounts, and endeavouring to match his disbursements to his resources, made his latter years utterly miserable. As early as 1726 he was in serious trouble for money, urgently needing £16,000, and apparently finding a good deal of difficulty in procuring it. He was informed by Mr. Gilbert, who carried on the negotiation for him,

> 'The Report of a War makes so large a sum at this time to be raised with Difficulty upon a Mortgage, so that if this method don't suit with your Lordship's conveniency, I fear 'twill be difficult for me to accommodate you without an allowance for further notice.'[1]

Eighteen months later Oxford had to make a humiliating and disagreeable confession to his own wife. After expressing 'the utmost sense of gratitude for bestowing so estimable a blessing upon me', and saying that his happiness depends entirely upon her, he goes on to admit that there is a matter which gives him great trouble and uneasiness, and that is the condition of their affairs. He adds:

> 'I freely own, the bad state of them is in very great measure due to my own Folly and my neglect in looking into them as I ought to have done and suffering myself to be imposed upon.'

He begs that he may have the benefit of her advice and direction, 'without which nothing effectual can be done'. He wishes to talk to her freely upon the subject, he says; his backwardness in doing so hitherto has been due to tenderness for her, to reluctance to cause her disquietude, and to shame at his mistakes. He hopes that he may by his

[1] Welbeck MSS., Edward Gilbert to the Earl of Oxford, 26 Nov., 1726.

future conduct make some sort of atonement for what is past.[1]

Despite these good resolutions things became worse rather than better; perhaps the mischief was so deeply rooted that no amendment was possible. In 1738 Alderman Barber spoke of Oxford as a noble lord without any vices, unless the buying of manuscripts and curiosities could be so termed, so reduced as to have 'not a guinea in his pocket' and forced to sell estates to pay his debts.[2] A crisis was reached in 1740, when Oxford found himself compelled to sell the house at Wimpole, the home of his beloved library, to Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, apparently for the sum of £86,740.[3] Latterly he degenerated under the strain of his misfortunes, as his father had done before him, and sought to forget his troubles in the oblivion vouchsafed by the wine bottle. His yellow eyes, muddy complexion, heavy expression, and wasted frame revealed the ravages within.[4] The catastrophe of 1740 was followed very shortly—on 16 June, 1741—by his death in his house at Dover Street at the early age of forty-one. Mrs. Pendarves, relating the event to Mrs. Dewes, says, 'My Lord Oxford has of late been so entirely given up to drinking that his life has been no pleasure to him or satisfaction to his friends. . . . He has had no enjoyment of the world since

[1] Welbeck MSS., Earl of Oxford to the Countess, 9 June, 1728. The Earl's difficulties increased after this. For example, the death of the profligate Lord Kinnoull left his wife (Oxford's sister) and her children destitute. They became dependent upon Oxford's bounty. Erasmus Lewis, writing to Swift (30 June, 1737), says how fortunate it is that God has given Lord Oxford both the power and the will to support his sister's numerous family. *Swift's Works*, vol. xix, p. 87. Lewis was unaware of Oxford's already serious financial difficulties.

[2] *Swift's Works*, vol. xix, p. 129.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 143; P. C. Yorke, *Life of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke* (3 vols., Cambridge, 1913), vol. i, p. 206.

[4] See Vertue's description of him in *Pope's Works*, vol. viii, p. 314 *n.*

his mismanagement of his affairs; it has hurt his body and mind, and hastened his death.'[1] What his illness was it was hard to say; 'his whole mass of blood is corrupted, and one of his legs mortified'. After his death his body was enclosed in a double coffin, draped in crimson velvet, and removed to the Jerusalem Chamber for interment in Westminster Abbey.

Lord Orrery wrote, retailing common and ill-informed gossip,

> 'The deceased Earl has left behind him many books, many manuscripts and no money. His lady brought him five hundred thousand pounds, four of which have been sacrificed to indolence, good nature, and want of worldly wisdom.'[2]

The widow's very dear friend, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, wrote:

> 'I have had a particular account of Lord Oxford's death from a very good hand, which he advanced by choice, refusing all remedies till it was too late to make use of them. There was a will found, dated 1728, in which he gave everything to my lady: which has affected her very much. Notwithstanding the many reasons she had to complain of him, I always thought there was more weakness than dishonesty in his actions.'

[1] *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs. Delany* (ed. Lady Llanover, 6 vols., 1861-2), vol. ii, p. 156.

[2] *Works of Swift*, vol. xix, p. 287. Contrast Vertue's reference: 'The death of this great and noble lover of Arts and encourager of Arts was a great and fatal loss to the publick in the year 1741. . . . Jaundice & death speedily put an end to that life, that had been the support cherisher and comfort of many many others who are left to lament, but none more heartily than Mr. Vertue whose decline of Friends and interest is too visible to deny or to forget.'—*Vertue Note Books*, vol. i, pp. 7, 21.

She considered that his career was an exemplification of a maxim of La Rochefoucauld: 'Un sot n'a pas assez d'étoffe pour être honnête homme.'[1]

Lady Mary's comments were apt to be acid. She detested Pope, and obviously despised his patron. Whether he was deserving of so damaging an epitaph or not, the Earl of Oxford's death was a grim ending to an unhappy life: a heavy retribution for an utter lack of common financial prudence. There have been all kinds of rake; here was one who owed his undoing to the prodigality of his benefactions to many private individuals in his own day and, in the form of a great library, to posterity.

[1] *Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, vol. ii, p. 99.

Chapter XVI

HENRIETTA, COUNTESS OF OXFORD

The great Harleian Collection was speedily broken up after the death of the second Earl of Oxford. His widow sold all the printed books and pamphlets to Thomas Osborne, a bookseller in Gray's Inn, for £13,000—a sum, it is said, considerably less than the cost of the binding; for the second Earl had been very fond of elaborate morocco bindings. The medals, antiquities, and other curios, together with some pictures, were sold at a public auction which Horace Walpole attended. He tells us that the pictures and antiquities sold dear—about £5,000, 'which yet, no doubt, cost him [i.e. the Earl of Oxford] much more, for he gave the most extravagant prices; the coins and medals went still dearer'.[1] Thus, the greater part of the collection was dispersed within a few months of the Earl's death. But one part of it, and that the most important, the Countess was resolved to keep intact—namely, the manuscripts. She retained them in her possession until 1753. On 19 March in that year one of her trustees, James West, wrote to inform her that the House of Commons had been considering the question of providing proper accommodation for the Cotton Library and 'for the curiosities left to the publick by Sir Hans Sloane'. Both Henry Pelham, First Lord of the Treasury, and the Speaker, 'spoke in great commendation of the Harleian manuscripts and seemed to

[1] See *Letters of Horace Walpole*, vol. i, pp. 191, 199; *Notes and Queries*, 3rd Series, vol. iv, p. 286.

express a desire that the publick might have them, if they could be purchased for £10,000.' This news, said Mr. West, he thought it his duty instantly to communicate to Lady Oxford 'in case if it were her pleasure to part with them at this sum no time might be lost in making the necessary arrangements'.[1] Her husband's nephew, Robert Drummond, Bishop of St. Asaph, also wrote to give her the same intelligence. Mr. Pelham and the speaker, he said, had both spoken 'with great regard and deference', not knowing whether she had any desire to sell. The collection he added, would be of great service if it were kept together for the public use, 'and the honour of it would remain with the name'.[2]

The Countess at once wrote to her daughter, the Duchess of Portland, and sought her advice and her husband's as to the disposal of the papers. She thought that if they were to be sold, they ought to fetch at least £20,000; but she left the decision to the Duke and Duchess, saying that she would acquiesce in anything they were disposed to do.[3] The upshot was the writing of a letter by the Duchess to Speaker Onslow on 3 April. It was a good and generous letter. 'Though', she wrote, 'I am told the expense of collecting them [the manuscripts] was immense and that if they were to be dispersed they would privately sell for a great deal of money, yet as a sum has been named and as I know it was my father's and is my mother's intention that they should be kept together, I will not bargain with the publick. I give you this trouble therefore to acquaint you that I am ready to accept your proposal upon condition that this great and valuable collection shall be kept together in a proper repository as an addition to the Cotton Library and be called by the name of the Harleian collection of manu-

[1] H.M.C., *Bath MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 182.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 183, 24 March, 1753.

scripts. I hope you do me the justice to believe that I do not consider this as a sale for an adequate price but your idea is so right and so agreeable to what I know was my father's intention that I have a particular satisfaction in contributing all I can to facilitate the success of it.'[1]

The price given for the manuscripts was so much below their market value that the transaction was as much in the nature of a gift as of a sale; and it is in recognition of this fact that ever since its conclusion the Duke of Portland of the day has had family representation among the trustees of the British Museum, the nucleus of which consisted of the bequest of Sir Hans Sloane, the Cotton Library, the Harleian collection of manuscripts, and the Hamilton collection of Roman antiquities, which were originally lodged in Montagu House—first opened to the public on 15 January, 1759—where they remained until the erection of the present British Museum building, the first wing of which was completed in 1828.

By a curiously unjust and perverse sort of argument, the disposal for such small amounts of the books and papers collected by her father-in-law and her husband has been used in evidence against the memory of the Countess of Oxford. She can have had no inkling of the importance of these treasures, it is contended: therefore she was a very dull and stupid woman. Thus generosity is imputed to her as a vice. Instead of consenting to the price which Parliament was prepared to give in order to include the Harleian manuscripts in a national repository, it would apparently have been more to the credit of her intelligence had she sold them to private individuals, even at the risk of their dispersal, in order to get a price nearer their market value. As to the suggestion that she did not appreciate their importance, she at least knew only too well how much they

[1] H.M.C., *Bath MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 183, Duchess of Portland to Arthur Onslow, Speaker of the House of Commons, 3 April, 1753.

had cost, and she might have been expected to try to recoup herself for some of the depredation caused to her own estate by her husband's lavish purchases, by trying to drive a hard bargain. The truth seems to be that Lady Oxford behaved both sensibly and generously with regard to the Harleian Collection. Admittedly she did not possess her husband's literary tastes or his passion for amassing books, manuscripts, medals, and coins. She had therefore no inclination to continue, or to maintain, the collection, the satisfactory housing of which would in itself have been a difficult problem for her. Indeed it was surmised, when the purchase of the manuscripts was discussed in the House of Commons, 'that many . . . have come to hurt by damps and for want of fire to air them'.[1] Lady Oxford therefore sold the greater part of the collection, but in no huckstering spirit, and refrained from selling the valuable manuscripts until she had the assurance that they would be kept together and well looked after.

There is a good deal to be said for the view that the reputation of Henrietta Harley has been blasted by a remark of Lady Bute to her mother, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu: 'How can you be so fond of that stupid woman?' The compilers of biographical sketches, it has been argued with justice, are liable to the weakness of finding 'an unfavourable or disparaging adjective' and of accepting it as true, without seeking corroboration or making independent enquiry.[2] Lady Oxford has been allotted the bad name of 'stupid', and hanged in consequence. Lady Bute's epithet has been remembered, but not her mother's rejoinder: 'Lady Oxford is not shining, but she has more in her than such giddy things as you and your companions can

[1] *Bath MSS.*, vol. ii, p. 182.

[2] From an admirable article on Henrietta, Countess of Oxford, by R. W. Goulding in *Transactions of the Thoroton Society*, vol. xxvii (1923), pp. 1-41.

discern.'[1] Whether Lady Bute, particularly in her young days, was any judge of character we have no means of knowing; but we do know a good deal about Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Her judgments no doubt were not always sound, for she had strong prejudices; on the other hand, she was a woman of very acute intelligence, and one of the last persons in the world to suffer fools gladly. Yet she was a constant and devoted friend of Lady Oxford. She described the Countess as 'the only comfort' of her life.

Again, although it may be true that the Countess had no sympathy with her husband's favourite pursuits, and did not care for all his friends, and certainly disliked Pope—on whose death she wrote to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, 'I did not mention it knowing the contempt you have for worthless People'[2]—on the other hand, there is no justification for the assumption that she had no literary interests. It was quite possible to appreciate Pope's poetry without approving of Pope's character; and it is also possible to have a love for poetry without liking Pope or his works at all. What evidence there is suggests that Lady Oxford 'had a serious taste in literature, and a well-stored mind. It is something to be able to say, as she could, that she had read all the works of Shakespeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, Spenser, Ben Jonson, Butler, Dryden, Pope, Waller, Suckling, Denham, Cleveland, Cotton, and Prior.'[3] The Countess certainly had quite a number of books of her own, and she not only possessed them but read them. Whether her reading was conscientious or perfunctory there is no

[1] *Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, vol. i, p. cxii. The letters of Lady Mary to the Countess of Oxford, written from Avignon or from Italy between April, 1744, and November, 1750, are to be found in vol. ii, pp. 134-211 *passim*.

[2] Welbeck MSS., Countess of Oxford to Lady M. Wortley Montagu, 18 August, 1744 (o.s.).

[3] Goulding, *op. cit.*, p. 17. He gives a list of some of her books, pp. 14-16.

means of telling; but she certainly seems to have read more extensively than was usual with titled ladies of her day.

Wimpole had been sold before her husband's death, and for life in London she would seem to have had no liking. She much preferred to live in the country. She said in 1743 that she found 'if possible my inclination for retirement increases'. She therefore spent her widowhood at Welbeck, and it is very evident that she felt a great love for the place. She frequently refers in the course of her letters to the beauty of the oaks, showing how genuine was her appreciation of the Nottinghamshire woodlands. 'I came to Welbeck at Night, and saw it in great Beauty, the Verdure fine, and Oakes well clothed with leaves',[1] she writes of her return home at the end of September, 1748. This is not the language of poetry, but a number of references of that type show her warm attachment to the place and to its setting.

Lady Oxford had her hobbies—such as the collecting of snuff-boxes—but her great preoccupation was the improvement and adornment of her home. Her *Books of Accounts for Repairing, Beautifying and Ornamenting the Ancient Seat of the Cavendishe Family at Welbeck*, in a series of small 4to volumes, indicate the extent of her building operations, upon which she was engaged throughout her widowhood—a period of fourteen years. Mrs. Delany states that Lady Oxford spent £40,000 on the house; but the accounts indicate that the actual sum was considerably less than that—£23,166. It was her object, she said, 'to incline my family to reside at the only Habitable Seat of my Ancestors, it being my opinion the Estate reduced, will still bear maintaining one House upon it,' and so she went ahead with what she knew the

[1] Welbeck MSS., Countess of Oxford to her grandson, the Marquess of Titchfield, 21 September, 1748.

'Generality of the World' called her folly.[1] Her original intention, it is clear, was merely to repair the existing buildings, which, she said, she found 'in allmost Ruines'.[2] Soon, however, she became involved in elaborate schemes of reconstruction.

The architect employed was John James, a man of some note, as he was Wren's successor at Greenwich Hospital and acted as surveyor both of St. Paul's and of Westminster Abbey after 1716. We find him receiving £42 for an initial survey of the buildings at Welbeck and thereafter occasional payments ranging from £100 to £300 until his death in 1746.

Most of the materials used came from local sources. Thus stone was brought from Creswell Crags in the immediate vicinity, from Mansfield, and from a quarry at Roche Abbey; paving stones from Bolsover and Steetley, and loads of marble from Stockwith, just on the Lincolnshire border; while of the many chimney-pieces supplied some came from Henry Watson of Bakewell. Others were made by Thomas Birch and Co., and Thomas Carter of London. The latter was paid as much as £1,057. 3s. 9½d. for three chimney-pieces, one of which exists in the present entrance-hall at Welbeck, though it probably lacks the original upper members, while Carter's drawing and specification for another are to be found in the library. Most of the wood used came from Welbeck Park itself, but some was purchased from timber-merchants. Among the miscellaneous charges in the account books there figures 'two setts for water closets', which were installed in 1743-4, and '4 mouse trapes', costing sixpence each, while it ap-

[1] Welbeck MSS., Countess of Oxford to Lady M. Wortley Montagu, 7 June, 1744 (o.s.). Lady Mary cordially approved the Countess's embellishment of her 'paternal seat' as 'one of the most rational as well as agreeable' of the amusements open to her. *Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, vol. ii, p. 139.

[2] *Ibid.*, same to same, 17 October, 1747.

pears that the Countess's fondness for her grandson deflected one of the carpenters from his normal duties for two days which he spent 'making Crikit Bats for Lord Marquas'.

The main course taken by the building operations can be followed from the entries in the account books, which open in 1741. In the next year extensive repairs, including underpinning, were started upon the western end of the south, or, as it is now named, the Oxford wing. This piece of reconstruction, followed by that of the remainder of the wing, took several years. A cupola on the roof bears Lady Oxford's portrait in relief with her initials and the date 1749, which presumably indicates when the rebuilding was completed. Owing to extensive alterations carried out by the fifth Duke of Portland in the 1860's, and others necessitated by a fire which took place in 1901, none of the arrangements or interior decorations of Lady Oxford's period have survived. A good deal, however, remains of the improvements which the Countess introduced in her own apartments in the north and west of the main building in spite of the structural changes made in 1901. There may still be seen part of a 'vestibule adorned in a Gothic way', which Mrs. Delany described when she visited Welbeck in 1756,[1] and in what she calls the Gothic room there still remain its plaster vault, its rich ornamented dado, and its marble mantelpiece executed by Henry Watson of Bakewell.[2]

So far, at any rate, as the exterior of the house is concerned, the Countess of Oxford did not perhaps do quite so much as she is supposed to have done, as it is clear that the so-called Oxford wing, generally ascribed to her, is no more than a reconstruction of a structure of the early seventeenth

[1] See *infra*, vol. ii, ch. 2 for her visit.

[2] I am much indebted to Mr. Francis Needham for making an analysis of Lady Oxford's account books for me.

century. But she pulled down the buildings consisting of stables, porter's lodge, gateway, etc., all built by John Smithson in 1633, which had hitherto stood opposite the west front of the house, and erected, parallel with the great riding-house which John Smithson had built for the first Duke of Newcastle, a large new stable, where the kitchens are now situated. She also remodelled the west front of the house, making considerable alterations inside it, and relaying and walling the court outside. She wrote to her young grandson, the Marquess of Titchfield, in January, 1749, to say that 'Welbeck outside is done', but the court was not and would not be, she believed, for some time to come.[1] In June, of the following year, she had not yet decided upon a design for the new stables and for the west court, but hoped soon to fix upon a handsome one.[2] She was anxious to hasten the architect's draft, so that she might show it to the Duke and Duchess of Portland. In the following December she tells Titchfield that his parents' liking for the designs has been a great encouragement to her to go on with the work. So she will go on with it as fast as circumstances permit. She had a hundred men employed[3] and intended to have more when the weather was better and the days were longer. The stucco men, she says, are working by candle light both at night and in the early morning. She hopes to start upon the erection of her new coach house, stables, etc., soon after Christmas.[4]

[1] Welbeck MSS., Countess of Oxford to the Marquess of Titchfield, 20 January, 1749.

[2] *Ibid.*, Countess of Oxford to the same, 2 June, 1750.

[3] In June, 1745, seventy-five workmen appear in the monthly pay-roll, including a foreman, who received 3s. a day; five masons at 1s. 8d. a day; fifteen carpenters at 1s. 6d. or 1s. 8d. (but one received only 8d.); five joiners at 1s. 4d. to 2s. (but one, presumably, an apprentice, only 3d.); nine bricklayers at 1s. 6d. to 1s. 8d.; and forty labourers, at 10d. to 1s. 4d.

[4] Welbeck MSS., Countess of Oxford to the Marquess of Titchfield, 22 December, 1750.

The operations did not proceed nearly fast enough to please the Countess. Work upon the entrance hall in the west front had started as early as 1743, and the 'Gothic Chimney Piece designed partly from a fine one at Bolsover, but composed of great variety of English, Scotch and Irish marbles and alabaster, and not one bit of foreign in it', made by Carter, had been completed in the following year.[1] But it took a long time to complete the Gothic Hall, which was her chief delight. She told her grandson in June, 1750, that 'the Hall when done will be very magnificent and beautiful. Excuse my vanity.'[2] But when more than a year later a visit from him was expected, he was warned that the hall would scarce be finished when he saw it.[3] The original Great Hall having been demolished in 1749, the new one was built in accordance with the Countess's own taste, with an elaborate plaster vault, and a wealth of would-be Gothic ornament on the walls and the doors, and a great stone fireplace in the same style, the latter by Christopher Richardson, carver, of Doncaster. The vault still remains unaltered, as does the lower portion of the chimney-piece; but the remainder of the decoration was removed in 1901-2, and replaced by oak panelling.

In August the Countess laments that 'Welbeck Improvements do not go on as fast as I wish. The many Fairs, Feasts and Races are sad Retarders of our Work.'[4] In

[1] Welbeck MSS., Countess of Oxford to Lady M. Wortley Montagu, 7 June, 1744. The Countess complains in 1747 of a 'Knave of an Architect that has cheated me and consequently made me postpone the improvements here'. Countess of Oxford to Lady M. Wortley Montagu, 21 January. This may refer to an architect referred to in the Accounts as 'West: Webb', who on 27 February, 1746, was paid £30 'for his Draught for the Great Room and his expenses', and who thereafter does not appear again.

[2] *Ibid.*, Countess of Oxford to the same, 2 June, 1750.

[3] *Ibid.*, Countess of Oxford to the same, 29 June, 1751.

[4] *Ibid.*, Countess of Oxford to the Marquess of Titchfield, 7 August, 1751. It appears that Lady Oxford was, or supposed herself to be,

October Lord Galway and some others visited Welbeck and 'commended all the Gothic Parts and execution of them'. But the west rooms were still in no sort of order, for the Countess had to receive company 'in the Saloon, or East Apartment'.[1] In May, 1752, the works were still going on slowly; the battlement wall on the north side of the west court, however, was nearly finished.[2] Next month the Countess reported that the battlements in the Court were not completed, but nearly so. In this year the Duke of Newcastle's riding-house was converted into stabling. The complete demolition of the old range of stables opposite the west wing enabled the oaks on that side of the house now to be 'seen in full view'.[3] In July, 1753, the Countess tells Titchfield, 'The Encouragement you give me by liking my Improvements makes me continue them with Pleasure, but the Workmen are slow it vexes me.' Two lodges were nearly finished by then, and a pair of wrought-iron gates, but she was waiting with impatience for others.[4]

Lady Oxford undertook the improvement and modernisation of the park and gardens of Welbeck as well as of the house, entrusting the design and execution of the new developments to a gardener named Francis Richardson. A new kitchen garden was made in 1744; in 1746 the 'East ground called the Toadhome' was planted between

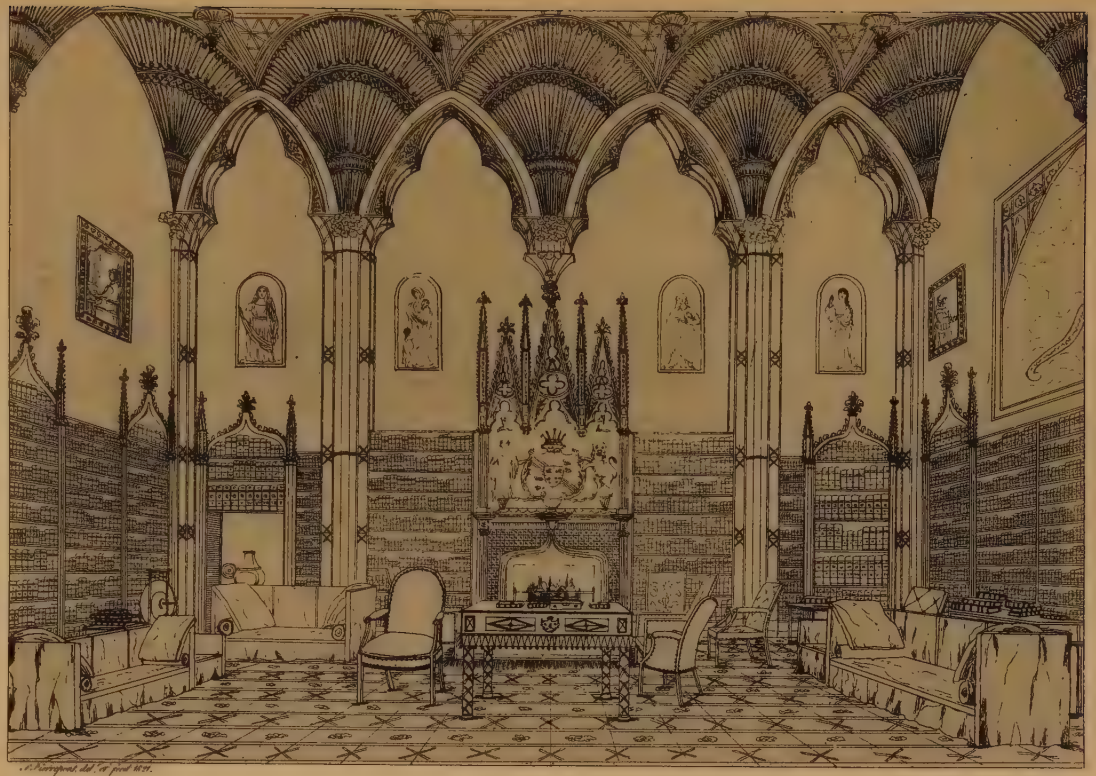
cheated by some of her builders, for in April, 1744, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu wrote to commiserate with her on this misfortune, adding: 'This world is so corrupt it is difficult to meet with honesty in any station, and such good hearts as yours which are not naturally inclined to suspicion, are often liable to be imposed upon.' *Letters of Lady M. Wortley Montagu*, vol. ii, p. 144.

[1] Welbeck MSS., Countess of Oxford to the Marquess of Titchfield, 2 October, 1751.

[2] *Ibid.*, Countess of Oxford to the same, 27 May, 1752.

[3] Referred to in letter of 9 May, 1753.

[4] Welbeck MSS., 25 July, 1753.



The Gothic Hall, Welbeck, 1821
from a drawing by S. Pierrepont

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the house and the present Shrubbery Lake, and a 'Serpentine Path' was constructed in the Wilderness near the famous Greendale Oak. Next year what is described as the Fortification Ditch—no doubt a relic of the Civil Wars—was opened up. In 1748 Richardson drew two elaborate plans of the house, the gardens, and the park. The first shews these as they then were, with a formal garden and water-garden to the south of the house—little altered since these were surveyed for the Earl of Newcastle in 1629. The second shews Richardson's proposed improvements, with the old gardens swept away, the park brought right up to the house on the south and west, with plantations and serpentine paths, while a lake was formed by damming the small river which runs through the park, on the site of the present Great Lake. It would appear that Richardson's scheme was carried out.

Lady Oxford did not confine her building operations to Welbeck itself. Her love of retirement was such that she wanted to have a more secluded dwelling, to which she could repair for absolutely complete privacy. She lives as retired as she can, she says in a letter to her beloved Lady Mary in 1748, 'in this country where my ancestors had lived so long. It is most agreeable to my health and inclinations, but must see more company than I chuse.' This has tempted her, she says, to build in Clipstone Park a small house, or cottage, with two floors, consisting of a small cubic hall, an octagon-shaped dining-room, a drawing-room, a bedchamber, and a dressing-room. As the roads round it are always good, she proposes to spend half the week there, taking only a maid and a footman with her.[1] One would suppose that even to so enthusiastic a builder as the Countess of Oxford, the incessant noise of the workmen at Welbeck year after year, and the constant confusion

[1] Welbeck MSS., Countess of Oxford to Lady M. Wortley Montagu, 21 January 1747/8.

they must have occasioned, were an added inducement to seek the solitude of the retreat in Clipstone Park, which she called Cavendish Lodge.[1]

Lady Oxford, in addition to carrying out the large building operations at Welbeck, was indefatigable in arranging the pictures and miniatures, and in particular the family portraits, and in fixing inscriptions upon them. For this work, and for the cataloguing of the pictures, she employed George Vertue, to whom the death of so good a benefactor as the late Earl had been a great blow. The Countess, it is obvious, was exceedingly proud of being a Cavendish and intensely interested in her ancestors. Horace Walpole visited Welbeck in August, 1756, the Countess having died in the previous December. In his usual sardonic, bantering, but not altogether unappreciative way, he records his impressions of all her handiwork. 'I went to Welbeck. It is impossible to describe the bales of Cavendishes, Harleys, Holleses, Veres, and Ogles: every chamber is tapestried with them; nay, and with ten thousand other fat morsels; all their histories inscribed; all their arms, crests, devices, sculptured on chimneys of various English marbles in ancient forms (and, to say truth, most of them ugly). Then such a Gothic hall, with pendant fretwork in imitation of the old, and with a chimney-piece like mine in the library.' [It ill became the owner of the Strawberry Hill mansion to poke fun at anybody else's Gothic structures!] He goes on: 'Such water-colour pictures! such historic fragments! In short, such and so much of everything I like, that my party thought they would never get me away again.' He refers to the portraits of the authoress Duchess of Newcastle, of the Dukes of Newcastle, of Prior, of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, to 'cabinets and glasses wainscotted with the Greendale oak'—the mightiest of all the great oaks of Welbeck—'so large that the old steward

[1] Now occupied as a farm-house.

wisely cut a way through it to make a triumphal passage for his lord and lady at their wedding, and only killed it!' And he ends by paying a tribute to the Countess, who in addition to 'doing ten thousand right and just things', had spent her widowhood 'in collecting and monumenting the portraits and reliques of all the great families from which she descended, and which centred in her'.[1]

Apart from her work at Welbeck, the widowhood of the Countess of Oxford was not very eventful. She had troubles regarding her property, as all large property owners have. She was dissatisfied with some of her agents, particularly two 'receivers of the largest estates belonging to me', whom she described as 'flagrant bad'. These she discharged. They had been chosen by her trustee, Mr. James West. For the other trustee, Robert Harley, a relation of her husband, she had nothing but respect; but Mr. West, a Member of Parliament and an antiquary, she came to view with aversion. The richer he grew and the grander, the more she disliked him. She was endeavouring in an energetic and business-like way to improve her land without laying out money, not allowing leases to be drawn without proper covenants, and very carefully considering the terms of new leases when old ones expired, in the hope of improving the property. If there had been neglect in her late husband's time, obviously she was determined that there was to be no more slackness now.[2]

Lady Oxford's most serious trouble in relation to her estates was a quarrel with her near neighbour, the Duke of Norfolk, who owned Worksop Manor, which had once belonged to the Earls of Shrewsbury, but which, with the marriage between Alathea, daughter of the seventh Earl, and Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, Surrey, and

[1] *Letters of Horace Walpole*, vol. iii, pp. 447-8.

[2] Welbeck MSS., Countess of Oxford to Lady M. Wortley Montagu, 6 January, 1749/50.

Norfolk[1], had passed into the possession of the Howards. The dispute, which arose as early as 1741 and continued till 1753, related to the boundaries between Welbeck and Worksop, and also to the Countess's right of way through Worksop Park. The Duke laid claim to all the ground from Worksop Park to the Welbeck Park pale, and insisted that he had a right to trees outside that area. In the view of the Countess he was encroaching upon the Common to the prejudice of one of her farms. She maintained that four score acres of ground outside the pale were hers, in virtue of a grant made to the Abbot of Welbeck in the days of the monastery. Some of those acres had been invaded by the Duke of Norfolk and enclosed within Worksop Park. The issues involved in this controversy were extremely complicated. There had been previous disputes, and when appeal was made to rights alleged to have existed as far back as the days when Welbeck was a house of Premonstratensian canons, there were obviously infinite opportunities for the researches of legal antiquarians, with all the expenses that such investigations usually entail. When one finds it being suggested to the Countess by one of her advisers that there may have been some private agreement come to between her Ladyship's ancestors and the owners of Worksop, to the effect that the latter should hold all the ground now in dispute and the former all the timber upon it; and when it is further brightly conjectured that this may be the solution of the whole conundrum, but immediately afterwards admitted that this is all merely guesswork, one realises that the longer the parties to such a dispute continued their quarrel the more completely lost they were likely to become in a maze of antiquarianism and surmise. The

[1] On the death of the 7th Earl of Shrewsbury in 1616 without male issue, the baronies of Talbot, Furnival, and Strange of Blackmere fell into abeyance between his three daughters and co-heirs. Eventually Alathea, the youngest, when sole survivor, succeeded to these baronies in 1646.

Countess resolutely declared in the early days of the disagreement, 'though I do not love disputes I shall never relinquish my property or fail to assert my right on all occasions',[1] and the Duke pertinaciously asserted that his right to the land in question was every bit as good as his right to any other part of his estates.

There were some hopes in 1743 that the Duke might be prepared to submit the whole matter to arbitration, he naming two gentlemen of the county to act as adjudicators, and the Countess other two. But the Duke was not in the least disposed to consider arbitration or compromise. If his adversary would not give way, he was quite ready to fight her in the courts. Litigation had no terrors for him; but Henrietta had in her early life had only too much experience of legal controversy, and knew how immensely costly it was likely to be in any case, and how doubtful its outcome. Her advisers were equally cautious. She was recommended, in view of the pertinacity of the Duke of Norfolk, to make more concession to him than perhaps in strictness she ought, rather than run the risks of a very expensive lawsuit, and was reminded that no kind of suit was 'attended with so much expence as those relating to Boundaries of Manors and Rights to Highways'.[2]

The upshot was that at long last, as no concession would satisfy her opponent, the Countess decided that complete surrender was preferable to litigation. She wrote to the Duke on 26 October, 1753:

> My Lord Duke,
>
> I have a great desire to live and leave my Family after me (as much as in me lieth) free from all contests

[1] Welbeck MSS., Countess of Oxford to W. Wenman, 6 March, 1741/2.

[2] *Ibid.*, Robert Harley to the Countess of Oxford, 14 January, 1743/4. See other papers relating to the dispute among the Welbeck papers.

and disputes, and particularly with you and your family who are so near neighbours.

And for an Instance of my earnest desire of it and to preserve a perpetual friendship and good understanding betwixt us, and our families hereafter, I am determined (if your Grace will not determine it yourself betwixt us) to resign all my right, property and claim to the piece of ground in contest between us, and for establishing the friendship as above I resign it and also my Right and Claim to the road thro' your Grace's Park.

I am,

Your Grace's obedient servant,

H. Cavendish Holles Oxford.[1]

The better part of valour was discretion; the Countess was cautious and, as some of her letters suggest, also shrewd.

Henrietta was asked to use her local influence in Nottinghamshire, Yorkshire, and Northumberland at election times. The Countess of Pembroke wrote to her in September, 1746, on behalf of Lord Howe, who proposed to stand for Notts., 'where', as she said, 'your Ladyship has such great power that if you will be so good as to give him your protection and interest, I have no doubt but he will meet with success'. To this appeal Lady Oxford very cautiously replied that she did not doubt but Lord Howe fully merited the character which Lady Pembroke gave him; but she was determined to 'attend the Concord of the Great persons of the County' before engaging herself in an affair of that sort'.[2] On the other hand, when the third Duke of Devonshire requested her interest on behalf of his son and of Sir Nathaniel Curzon, who were standing jointly for

[1] Welbeck MSS.

[2] *Ibid.*, Mary Herbert, wife of the 9th Earl of Pembroke, to Countess of Oxford, 30 September, 1746; Countess of Oxford to Countess of Pembroke, copy in reply.

Derbyshire, she had no hesitation in instructing the steward of her estates in that county to take care that all her tenants voted as his Grace desired.[1] And when the Duke of Newcastle and Henry Pelham asked her to support Lord Ossulston and Sir William Middleton as candidates at the next election for Northumberland, urging that after the late rebellion (the "Forty-Five') it was desirable to have persons of unquestioned attachment to His Majesty's Government returned for the northern counties, she wrote to Mr. West: 'You know I have never ask'd or receiv'd any Favour from the Duke of Newcastle or Mr. Pelham; but I believe I shall be inclined to oblige them in this particular.'[2] The Countess was not going to commit herself on behalf of an unknown quantity in her own county of Notts.; on the other hand one of the Cavendishes had always a claim to her favour, and although she had no great love for the Pelhams, she no doubt felt that the argument they used in this instance was a strong one.

Greatly attached as she was to Welbeck and her own countryside, Lady Oxford did not travel much, except to London, occasionally to Bath, and to Bulstrode in order to visit her daughter, her son-in-law, and her grandchildren. But we have details of one much longer journey. On 24 April, 1745, she set out from Welbeck for Scotland, and she did not return till 8 June. She stayed in Edinburgh and with her relatives at Dupplin.[3] Six weeks later the Young Pretender landed in Scotland. Lady Oxford was at Welbeck in the following year when the rebel army advanced into the English midlands. She wrote to Lady Mary in February, 1746: 'My estate is probably the worse for these publick

[1] Welbeck MSS., William, 3rd Duke of Devonshire, to the Countess of Oxford, 1 July 1747; Countess's reply of 3 July.

[2] *Ibid.*, James West to the Countess of Oxford, 6 January, 1746, and her reply, 17 January.

[3] *Portland MSS.*, vol. vi, pp. 182-91.

disturbances in the nation.' But her fortitude never failed her. With all the courage of her ancestors she was resolved not to allow the appearance of a hostile army to drive her from her ancestral home. On the approach of the Highlanders, she reported: 'All Notts fled with great Precipitation. I chose to remain here.'[1]

During her widowhood the Countess was often ill. She had a poor appetite, and probably an equally poor digestion. She often complains in her letters to Lady Mary of violent colic, terrible cramp, lameness, gout, pains in her head, and deafness. She narrowly escaped death, when she had a serious attack of pleurisy in the winter of 1744. She disliked being fussed over, and her servants were not allowed to be too solicitous, with the result on this occasion that she was dangerously ill before anyone in the household realised it. She made pilgrimages to Bath in hope of relief by the virtue of its medicinal waters, but they did not always prove efficacious.[2] There was a mineral spring no further away than Clipstone Park, which restored some people to health, she said, but it did not agree with her.[3] At the earnest desire of the Duke of Portland and her daughter she went up to London in July, 1749, for advice as to her health, and for relief for her deafness, and stayed for a week; 'but to no good purpose.' She adds philosophically: 'I will endeavour to submit patiently to God's wise determinations and be thankful for his great Mercies he bestows on me.'[4] Stoically she endured many ailments during the last few years of her life. On either 6 or 8 December, 1755, she was seized 'with an apoplexy and palsy'; she 'never spoke after her being seized, but died at

[1] Welbeck MSS., 8 February, 1745/6.

[2] *Ibid.*, Countess of Oxford to Lady M. Wortley Montagu, 3 March, 1743 (o.s.).

[3] *Ibid.*, same to the same, 23 December, 1749.

[4] *Ibid.*, same to the same, 2 August, 1749.

five o'clock the following morning'. She was buried in Westminster Abbey.

It is possible that Lady Oxford was not a highly intelligent woman, but the evidence of her correspondence does not suggest that she was at all lacking in brains. If she was not clever, she seems to have been both sensible and efficient; and she was certainly capable both of feeling and of inspiring affection. Of the first there is sufficient proof in her letters to her grandson and to her 'ever most dear Lady Mary', to whom she said her heart was devoted 'in a juster sense than any words of hers could express'; while the latter is revealed in the constant attachment of Lady Mary to the Countess, whose friendship she esteemed 'the greatest blessing and honour of her life', and whom she described as the 'only friend in whom I never saw anything but what was worthy the highest esteem'.[1] But perhaps more striking is the tribute of one who was never prone to flatter, Horace Walpole, in his allusion to the 'poor woman' who spent her widowhood 'in doing ten thousand right and just things'.[2]

[1] See *Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, vol. ii, pp. 137, 142, 144, 153, etc., etc.

[2] Quoted *supra*, p. 401.

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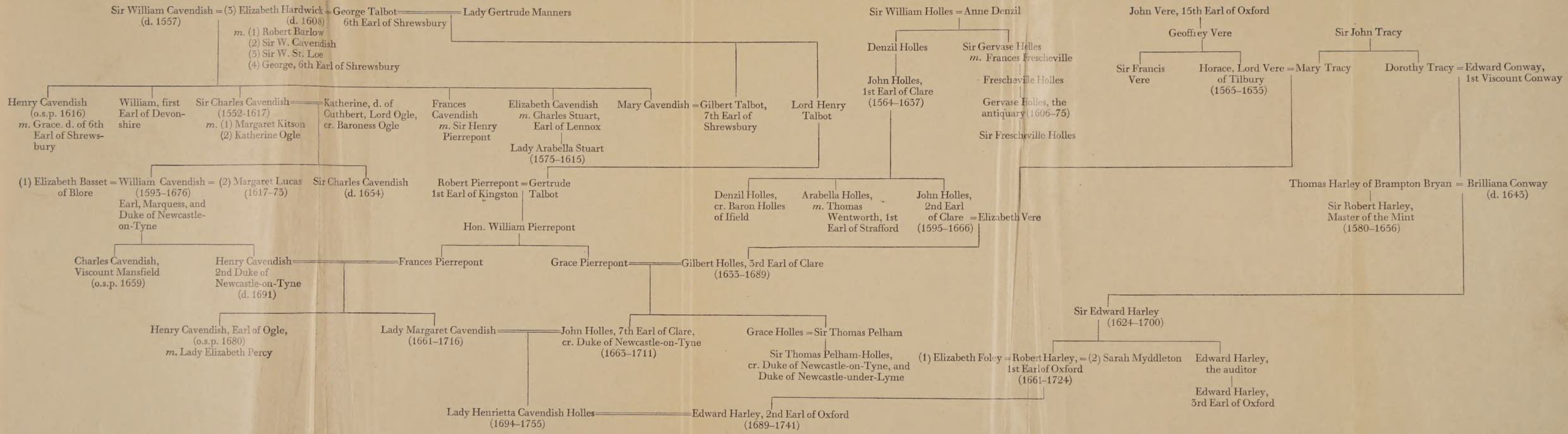
GENEALOGY OF THE CAVENDISH, HOLLES, AND HARLEY FAMILIES


Sir William Cavendish (d. 1557)
(3) Elizabeth Hardwick (d. 1608)
m. (1) Robert Barlow
(2) Sir W. Cavendish
(3) Sir W. St. Loe
(4) George, 6th Earl of Shrewsbury
George Talbot 6th Earl of Shrewsbury
Lady Gertrude Manners
Henry Cavendish (o.s.p. 1616) m. Grace, d. of 6th Earl of Shrewsbury
William, first Earl of Devonshire
Sir Charles Cavendish (1552-1617) m. (1) Margaret Kitson (2) Katherine Ogle
Katherine, d. of Cuthbert, Lord Ogle, cr. Baroness Ogle
Frances Cavendish m. Sir Henry Pierrepont
Elizabeth Cavendish m. Charles Stuart, Earl of Lennox
Lady Arabella Stuart (1575–1615)
Mary Cavendish
Gilbert Talbot, 7th Earl of Shrewsbury
Lord Henry Talbot
(1) Elizabeth Basset of Blore
William Cavendish (1593–1676) Earl, Marquess, and Duke of Newcastle-on-Tyne
(2) Margaret Lucas (1617–73)
Sir Charles Cavendish (d. 1654)
Robert Pierrepont 1st Earl of Kingston
Gertrude Talbot
Hon. William Pierrepont
Charles Cavendish, Viscount Mansfield (o.s.p. 1659)
Henry Cavendish 2nd Duke of Newcastle-on-Tyne (d. 1691)
Frances Pierrepont
Grace Pierrepont
Gilbert Holles, 3rd Earl of Clare (1633–1689)
Henry Cavendish, Earl of Ogle, (o.s.p. 1680) m. Lady Elizabeth Percy
Lady Margaret Cavendish (1661–1716)
John Holles, 7th Earl of Clare, cr. Duke of Newcastle-on-Tyne (1663–1711)
Grace Holles
Sir Thomas Pelham
Sir Thomas Pelham-Holles, cr. Duke of Newcastle-on-Tyne, and Duke of Newcastle-under-Lyme
Lady Henrietta Cavendish Holles (1694–1755)
Edward Harley, 2nd Earl of Oxford (1689–1741)
Sir William Holles
Anne Denzil
Denzil Holles
Sir Gervase Holles m. Frances Frescheville
John Holles, 1st Earl of Clare (1564–1637)
Frescheville Holles
Gervase Holles, the antiquary (1606–75)
Sir Frescheville Holles
Denzil Holles, cr. Baron Holles of Ifield
Arabella Holles, m. Thomas Wentworth, 1st Earl of Strafford
John Holles, 2nd Earl of Clare (1595–1666)
Elizabeth Vere
John Vere, 15th Earl of Oxford
Geoffrey Vere
Sir Francis Vere
Horace, Lord Vere of Tilbury (1565–1635)
Sir John Tracy
Mary Tracy
Dorothy Tracy
Edward Conway, 1st Viscount Conway
Thomas Harley of Brampton Bryan
Brilliana Conway (d. 1643)
Sir Robert Harley, Master of the Mint (1580–1656)
Sir Edward Harley (1624–1700)
(1) Elizabeth Foley
Robert Harley, 1st Earl of Oxford (1661–1724)
(2) Sarah Myddleton
Edward Harley, the auditor
Edward Harley, 3rd Earl of Oxford

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